This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Harvard College
Library

1,1

HISTORICAL DRAMAS.

THE

HISTORICAL DRAMAS

OF

HENRY, LORD DARNLY,

KING OF SCOTS;

JOHN, EARL OF GOWRYE;

AND

MARY'S BOWER;

OR

THE CASTLE OF THE GLEN;

Of Five Acts each:

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By ROBERT DUNMOOR CRAUFURD BROWN,
OF NEWHALL, 'SPITALS OF NEWHALL, AND
CARLOPS, ESQUIRE, ADVOCATE, A. M.

Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.
HOR. *De Arte Poetica.*

VOL. I.

JOHN ANDERSON, JUN. EDINBURGH,
55, NORTH BRIDGE STREET.
Alex. Smellie, Printer to the University.
MDCCCXXX.

23497.37

F. E. Cabot
Boston

DEDICATED, IN GRATITUDE,

TO THE MEMORY OF

THOMAS DUNMOOR

OF KELVINSIDE, ESQUIRE;

YOUNGER, AND ONLY BROTHER TO

WILLIAM DUNMOOR CRAUFURD OF BIRKET,

POSSIL, AND *QUEEN MARY'S* LANGSIDE, NEAR GLASGOW,

IN THE COUNTIES OF AYR, LANERK, & RENFREW,

ESQUIRE;

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE GRANDSON AND WARD,

ROBERT DUNMOOR CRAUFURD BROWN.

PREFACE.

To give solid information, by closely adhering to recorded events, as the references will prove, is the leading object in the two first of the following Historical Dramas.

In these, excepting as to a slight unavoidable deviation at the end of the first, with regard to the acts separately, all the unities of time, place, and plot, have been most strictly attended to. Each act forms but one scene, with one argument or prologue; and those of time, and action, have regulated the whole piece. To have more scenes, is to disjoint, to ravel the story, and to multiply the acts. To prefix a prologue to each, is to add to their exposures: yet Allan Ramsay, writing under the eye of that accomplished judge, President Duncan Forbes of Culloden, as he advertises, "at the desire of some persons of dis-"tinction," and his servile flock of imitators; some, at least, of whom should have known better; seemingly unconscious of any thing but what was right, without scruple or restraint, have done both.

In conducting these two dramas, more attention has also been paid, in action, expression, and dialogue, to the varied, and instructive course of nature, as shewn by experience and record, than to the raising, from art and stratagem, a transient wonder, and surprizing effect, by the affected, and unnatural novelties, and disgusting violations of truth, so prevalent in, what may be called, the poetical plays, even of the highest celebrity.

New-Hall House,
Nov. 30th 1829.

HENRY, LORD DARNLY,

KING OF SCOTS;

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

Henry,

LORD DARNLY,

KING OF SCOTS;

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,

OF FIVE ACTS.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a " butcher's " hand,
Of life, of crown, of Queen, at once dispatcht;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, unanointed, unanel'd:
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
Oh, horrible! Oh, horrible! Most horrible!

SHAKSP. *Hamlet.*

THE SECOND EDITION.

JOHN ANDERSON, JUN. EDINBURGH,

55, NORTH BRIDGE STREET.

Alex. Smellie, Printer to the University.

MDCCCXXX.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following attempt originated from an accidental investigation of that celebrated portion of the History of Scotland, which has long given employment to so much industry, ingenuity, learning, and zeal, in friends and foes; without, as yet, having completely attained the object of either side—a general and decided conviction on the one hand, of QUEEN MARY's entire innocence; or, on the other, of the extent of her guilt in the murder of her husband HENRY LORD DARNLY.

These seemingly insurmountable difficulties, in the way of certainty, apparently arise from the strong prejudices, in her subjects and herself, bred equally against each other, by her unsuitably refined and catholic education on the continent; from the intolerance of both; from the rugged, regardless, presbyterian bigotry and fanaticism, of the period in which she unfortunately landed from France, and continued to live, as there, an inflexible papist, in opposition to the spring-tide of religious reform; with the unceasing duplicity, and merciless malignity of her able enemies; from their deep, designing, artful, ambitious characters, encouraged by the long minority and absence of one woman, and the regency of another, a foreigner, both papists; the notorious atrocity of many of their actions; and the darling interests, under Elizabeth, they gratified in Church and State, by misleading, defaming, and degrading their sovereign: This they did, by the most insufferable insolence toward her while in Scotland; and, after driving her out of it into the toils of their friend south of the Tweed, by every contrivance, however shamelessly base, as Scotsmen, that would impose upon her self-elected arbiters, first at York and then at Westminster; favour their accusations, from selfish views; in appearance justify their own conduct; disgrace hers, so

as to tumble her from her throne; and thus, after betraying their country to England, enable themselves to attain her authority in the State. Such flagrant circumstances render extremely problematical every charge, without the clearest evidence in proof of it, that originates with Queen Mary's leading adversaries; men who, unsupported by Elizabeth, and her equally crafty minister Cecil, would have been undefended, had they not been likewise the leaders of Reform in religion, to which we are eventually so much indebted for all the inestimable blessings of education, toleration, and liberty. It is only from those facts and documents with which they had no concern, therefore, that we are entitled to judge, as to her innocence, or guilt.

From its connexion with the Reformation, and these, her unrelenting persecutors, the chief actors in that great occurrence, as well as in all the transactions, religious, political, and personal, of Queen Mary's, also otherwise eventful, reign, in addition to her own attractions, this is, by much, the most interesting and important period of the Scottish History. With GOWRIE'S CONSPIRACY against her son; both produced by the same causes, the unpardonable insult to royalty, by the outrageous murder of David Rizio, in the one case, and, added to it, the Raid of Ruthven, in the other; it is likewise, as to the criminals, the most unsettled; and, perhaps, those very doubts which the misrepresentations of party, ecclesiastical and civil, have produced, in both cases, by inviting and whetting inquiry, have tended, in no small degree, to increase the interest, and heighten their celebrity. It is rather an unfortunate circumstance attending the pursuit of certainty and truth, as well as of other gratifications, that the feeling it excites seldom outlasts its continuance, and the attainment of its object; that possession should so often produce indifference, and neglect.

To so bold and daring a deed as an act of Regicide, the attention is particularly attracted, even although otherwise impressive, by its connexion with occurrences of the first importance. Here, it is accompanied with aggravating, peculiar, doubtful, and mysterious circumstances, from their own magnitude and results, both personal

and national, calling for investigation. It is the cause of the most shocking and singular train of consecutive prodigies, that, previous to the late diabolical Revolution in France, of which Queen Mary was once a sovereign, perhaps ever occurred. To every one interested in the history of the means by which the liberty of his country has been accomplished, merely possessed of any curiosity to act upon, a desire, if possible, to be master of the truth, by an examination of the evidences and arguments on record, is therefore naturally strong; but to such a person, born in the country, and residing on the spot, where the crime was perpetrated, with the scenes of action daily before his eyes exciting him to it, the impulse becomes altogether irresistible. Whether the view here given is just, or not, it is for others to determine. Even without entirely excluding, as at least partial imitations of her known sentiments and connexions, the famous Letters said to have been discovered by Morton, as published by Buchanan, the unbiassed inference from such an inquiry, in the present case, is, that the Queen was neither so guilty as some imagine her to have been; nor so innocent as her advocates, with much gallantry for suffering beauty, and national honour, or from catholic zeal, or toryism, or pure benevolence, according as they are influenced by one or other, or most, or all of these or such kindred motives, generously wish to have her considered.

The Principals, who have been charged with this atrocious Regicide, as being either directly or indirectly concerned, are *Queen Mary* herself;—James Hepburn, *Earl of Bothwell*, her favourite Minister;—James Stewart, *Earl of Murray*, her natural brother, late Prior of St Andrews;—James Douglas, *Earl of Morton*, her Chancellor; and William Maitland *of Lethington*, her Secretary.

Archibald Douglas's Letter to the Queen of Scots, in the Appendix, No. 12, to Vol. II. of Robertson's History of Scotland; the *Letters of Lethington and Morton*, through the Laird of Carmichael, disclosing the guilt of each other; and *Morton's own confession*, when under condemnation; exclusive of Thomas Crawford's accusation of *Lethington*, before Murray's Council, in 1569, as stated by *Crawfurd* in his *Memoirs*; seem to prove of themselves, beyond a possibility of doubt, that MORTON

ings, jealousies, enmities, and interests; his treachery, proved by his twice betraying, and at last bringing Norfork to the scaffold; as also the Earl of Northumberland, by delivering him up to Elizabeth;[3] and his breach of faith to Hamilton and Herries, in 1569; his presbyterian attachments, in direct opposition to Darnly's catholic creed, and the Queen's zeal for Popery; his stern penetration, severe, deep, cautious, unrelenting policy, and daring ambition, bred and fostered by the long minority, and absence of the Queen, and the regency of her mother, a foreigner.—*9th*, In pursuance of an apparently systematic plan of leaving his plots, when ripe, to be executed by his instruments; as evinced by his absence, though so great a gainer by it, at the assassination of Rizio; from his asking permission at court to cross the Firth for St Andrews, even though under a sufficient excuse, if true, on 9th Feb. 1567, the very eve of its perpetration, and that in the storms of winter, as if to shun suspicion from the regicide, soon after which he returned; and by his again, subsequently, withdrawing himself for France, on 9th April 1567, the verge of Bothwell's mock trial, which took place only two days after, leaving *Morton* and *Maitland* to act for him.—*10th*, From his receiving, along with similar acknowledgments at the same time to his confederates, *Maitland* and *Morton*, a "Ratification of the earldom of Murray and other "lands,"[4] immediately after Bothwell's concerted acquittal, before the infamous bond, signed the day posterior to his entertainment, called *Ainslie's Supper*, by *Morton*, among others; and the frantic marriage itself which followed, implicating the Queen in Bothwell's guilt, with all its preliminaries.—*11th*, From its being evidently so much for his and his party's political interest, to mislead, ensnare, and render odious their inconsiderate, unsuspecting sovereign; with the utter improbability, that the concern his confederates, *Morton* and *Maitland*, had in a transaction of such high import to his own wishes in particular, should be unknown to him, their leader.—*12th*, From the dying assertions of Paris, Captain William Blackadder,[5] and Bothwell's servants, Hay, Powrie,

---

[3] Hume, Eliz. C. 3. 1572.
[4] Keith, p. 379.
[5] Crawf. Mem. p. 35.

and Dalgleish, at their executions, that the murder of the Lord Darnly was the invention of *Murray* and his friends.—13*th*, From the deadly hatred that subsisted between him and Darnly.—And, 14*th*, From the additional still more direct charges against him by *Leslie*, Bishop of Ross, in his *Defence of Queen Mary's honour*.—From these, and other presumptions, that *Murray* was in the knowledge of the conspiracy, and even secretly accessory to it, by his private indirect advice and assistance, as proposed by *Lethington* at the Conference, only a few weeks before it took effect, and as was correctly followed afterwards, he being "to look through his fingers, and be-"hold their doings, saying nothing,"[6] is in the highest degree probable. To an impartial enquirer, that it must have been known to *Bothwell* and the Queen, with his friends *Morton* and *Maitland*, he would, at any rate, approve of it in his heart; and that, therefore, they had reason to rely on his countenance, even were he ignorant of it, is also as evident as the nature of such evidence will admit of. When Dr Robertson endeavours to exculpate *Murray*, by saying that Bothwell did not recriminate, he seems not to have been aware, that neither did he recriminate, either with regard to *Maitland*, or to *Morton* himself, who, of course, should, thus, remain innocent likewise. But *Morton*, in particular, was, clearly, not only accessory, and acknowledged to have been so; but, to heighten his guilt, after having, with the former, procured the acquittal, got it ratified by Parliament, and even, with the nobles and clergy, he had signed the disgraceful bond of recommendation to the subsequent marriage; after doing all this, he had the unparalleled effrontery to place himself at the head of those who had recourse to arms to avenge the Murder, and to lead on the very association that drove Bothwell into banishment on that account. It is remarkable, that not one of this triumvirate died a *natural* death! *Murray* was shot in passing through Linlithgow, in revenge for an act of oppressive cruelty, in Jan. 1570; *Maitland*, having avowedly joined the Queen's party against *Morton*, to avoid falling into his former friend the Regent's hands, slew himself in

[6] See the Protestation of Huntly and Argyl.—Tytler, p. 2. c. 3. p. 234.

1573; and *Morton*, for being art and part in the murder of the King, on 2d June 1581, was beheaded with the *Maiden* he had himself imported for the execution of others. Their conduct, and its results, their fates, however, might have been very different in better times.

As to BOTHWELL's own guilt, every thing is open and undisputed. It seems equally clear, it arose from his trusting that the estrangement from its object would secure approbation, or forgiveness; and that whatever can be charged to the *Queen's* previous inactive remissness, or posterior acquiescence, ought, in justice, to be ascribed to the behaviour of Darnly, and to the infatuating influence of Bothwell's personal services, accomplishments, and address, aided by the conference at Craigmillar, his acquittal, the bond of recommendation by her nobility and clergy, and the antecedent, and subsequent artifices of their interested enemies.

With regard to the QUEEN herself, toward whose share in the murder of her husband so many eyes and wits have directed their keenest attentions, it is but fair to judge from proven and probable facts and circumstances only, as in other cases, and not from defective, suspicious, and disputed evidence. As to her negative guilt, and implied acquiescence, the barbarity of the age and place should be weighed. The weak, yielding, constitutional, "ill-judging,"[7] fickle frailty of her sex, should also be duly considered. It should be considered that she was a woman; a woman, too, under youthful passions; bred abroad, a stranger at home, left alone unprotected, destitute, a papist, loosely educated amidst bad examples; irritated by ingratitude and ill usage; a high spirited *Queen*; a sovereign in *her own right*; accomplished, beautiful, slighted, courted, afraid of a deep widely spread affront, possessing all the captivating personal and mental charms, and delicate feelings of her sex, jealous to neglects, and blinded by love. Of positive participation, there is no appearance. Of all the conspirators who suffered for it, not one of them even so much as insinuated that the *Queen* was concerned in the deed; and Bothwell himself declared, in Denmark, that she was not.[8] The way it was

[7] Swift, Battle of the Books. [8] Crawf. Mem. pp. 46, 277.

executed, indeed, of itself seems to free her; as she had no occasion to bring him to Edinburgh, to perpetrate it publicly in her metropolis, when it could have been done with so much more ease and privacy, either at Stirling or Glasgow. Even as to Bothwell, it must be confessed, after the poison had failed, the crime was committed in the most public manner possible. He died mad at last. The frenzy appears to have seized him at the Craigmillar conference, and to have increased upon him till it drove him into a dungeon in Denmark, where he expired.

That *letters*, written by the *Queen* to Bothwell, and enclosed by him in a silver *casket*, were seized by the servants of *Morton*, on the 20th June 1567, and, as Spotswood states, in consequence of the treacherous information of *Bothwell's* deputy governor of the castle, *Sir James Balfour*, is likely enough; although no such discovery is taken notice of, any where, till near six months thereafter, in an act of Murray's secret council, dated 4th December 1567, and again in an act of Murray's parliament of 15th December 1567. They are next referred to, in October 1568, before the English Commissioners at York, by Murray, Mortoune, Maitland, and George Buchanan, who appeared against the *Queen*. Of those first published, in Latin and Scotch, by Buchanan, in his *Detectio Mariæ Reginæ*, in 1571, the holographs themselves, however, said to have been in French, if any such ever existed, are lost. Candidly, it must appear impossible, and even ridiculous, to draw, therefore, conclusions, and such important ones, from the disputed contradictory copies, into other languages, of originals denied to have been genuine, and that the *Queen*, at the time, was whence they are said to have been written—mere scraps and jottings—scarcely intelligible—confusedly put down, without date, subscription, seal, or address, or support from concurring declarations and facts. The servant, George Dalgliesh, Bothwell's chamberlain, from whom the little silver cabinet, or box, was taken, in returning to his master with it from the castle of Edinburgh, of which Bothwell had been governor, after Mar, underwent an examination, but without venturing to ask a single question, as to either it, or its contents, said to have been coarse Letters, gross Sonnets, and a promise of marriage; and Nicholas Hubert, or French Paris, at

his execution, declared, he never carried from the Queen any such letter, as the first of the eight pretended ones bears he did; also that she was "neither a party, nor of "council in the cause," as these letters would make her to be. To deduce such inferences from, as admitted, but copies of translations of *Letters*, and *Love Verses* too, in style, and contents, and appearance, very unlike the effusions of a lady, though of the lowest rank, and still more so of an accomplished Queen, and her authenticated writings, under the suspicious circumstances accompanying their production and hasty concealment by her interested enemies, after what they had previously proved themselves capable of, is altogether unwarranted. It is, indeed, very unaccountable, how such respectable writers as Mr Hume and Dr Robertson, both Scotsmen, interested in the honour of their country, and the former charged even with partiality to royalty, and the house of Stuart in particular, should, as evidences of *Queen Mary's* participation in so foul a crime, found at all upon such *Letters* and *Verses*, as if hers, free from addition, alteration, interpolation, or omission. They themselves acknowledge them to be, obviously, but translations, from translations in Latin, translated from a translation in the Scoto-Saxon dialect, though apparently the original forgery, conjectured to be itself a translation by the Queen's bigotted, credulous calumniator *Buchanan*, who, on that supposition, must, in his Latin other translation, have misunderstood several passages of his own previous Scottish one. They say they were undoubtedly written in French; but of the real contents of the supposed originals, if ever they at all existed in an unquestionable shape, they, of course, ludicrously enough, are driven to own they are, and must be, totally ignorant; the present, only existing, French copy, being allowed to be but a translation of the incorrect Latin one, by Buchanan, from the Scots copy, which, too, absurdly supposes, had this been only a translation, that, in his Latin version, he would have had recourse to it, if there had been French originals in his own possession. They, besides, confess their dissimilitude to the first sentences of each of the truly, as imagined, original *Letters*, prefixed to those published as their translation in Scots. All this they do in the face of the repeated offers of the Queen, and her Commissioners, to prove the pre-

tended originals, when produced, to be forgeries; of their being refused a sight of them, to enable them to do so; of undeniable evidences of the *Queen*'s hand-writing having been previously actually counterfeited by *Maitland*; and of the ease with which many others about her person, less partial to her than he was, could have done the same, so as to have furnished a plausible ground of affected belief to Elizabeth's Commissioners, and those others of her enemies to whom it was contrived they should be confusedly and hurriedly shown at Westminster, before having, by Murrray, only copies, as the record bears, of date 8th Dec. 1568, they were immediately demanded back, and huddled out of view, like the pretended originals of Ossian's poems, never more to be exposed to the risk of detection: Nay, farther, on closing the commission, allowing, 12th Jan. 1569, Murray, and the rest of the accusers, to return to Scotland, in defiance of the attestations of Cecil, and Elizabeth herself, of their failure, and notwithstanding of all they had attempted, that "there had been nothing sufficiently producit or shawn "to them, whereby the Queen of England suld conceive or "tak ony evil opinion of the Queen, her guid-sister."[7] In the same year, 1569, that the commissions ended, Leslie, Bishop of Ross, published his *Defence of Queen Mary's honour*; neither he, Lords Livingston, Boyd, Herries, &c. her commissioners, having, for obvious reasons, ever been allowed to see, either the originals, or the copies of these Letters, even Elizabeth and Cecil thought unworthy of notice; which they would, nor could possibly have done, had they not believed them to be *forgeries*, as offered to be proved, and, farther, that their Queen's accusers themselves, Murray and his associates, were the true inventors, counsellors, conspirators, and some of them the executors, of the King's murder.

But, there are other circumstances brought forward to implicate the *Queen*, of a more open, and less exceptionable kind: Her provoked dislike to her husband, increased by the insulting, savage assassination of her fa-

---

[7] Goodall, vol. ii. p. 305.

vourite Rizio, fanned, only a few weeks before the fatal event that soon followed it, by the Craigmillar Conference: Her fearful apprehensions of his wild scheme of flying the kingdom, to scandalize her on the continent: Her attachment to Bothwell, as to Rizio before, occasioned by Darnly's ingratitude: Her trusting to the sentiments and sincerity of Murray, her brother, and his friends. That these occurrences made her, at one time at least, desirous of her husband's removal, and, disregarding Bothwell's application for a warrant, to skreen Morton, afterwards remain inactive and remiss, knowing that such a plan was in agitation, from the failure of proof in her adversaries as to direct participation, notwithstanding of their pretended *detection* through Buchanan, is, however, even more than justice can allow. It is by no means inconsistent with the natural inconstancy of her sex, and with this previous provoked dislike, which her *Letters*, as published by Buchanan himself, evince not to have been unalterable, that, in the hopes of a change in his behaviour, and resolves, through recollection and pity, as these same defamatory *Letters* themselves, likewise, clearly indicate, the Queen's affections to the father of her Son, might in reality, as it did in appearance, have begun to return with his dawnings of health; and that her grounds of suspicion, as to the conspiracy, were such as to justify her refraining from taking any steps to prevent what she fondly believed, or was led to believe, had no foundation, or would not be executed. This farther coincides with what Sir James Melvil, an eye and ear witness, relates in his *Memoirs*, p. 78, as having occurred immediately after the murder, on the part of the *Queen*. Says he, "Her Majesty kept her chamber for a "while. I came to the door the next morning after the "murther, and the Earl of *Bothwel* said that her Majes-"ty was sorrowful and quiet, which occasioned him to "come forth." Neither, on her husband's death having actually and irremediably happened, is it contradictory to suppose that, excused by his acquittal, ratified by Parliament; her destitute condition, exposed to barbarous and turbulent factions, ecclesiastical as well as civil; and his long and faithful services, Bothwell, by his eloquence and address, might blind and hurry her into the hasty, imprudent, and desperate course she afterwards pursued,

in the belief that the infamous bond of recommendation, signed by Morton and the other Nobles, and also by the Clergy, was sincere, and that Bothwell's conduct, of course, had met with the hearty approbation, both in Church and State, of all the leading characters in her kingdom.

Yet, with *Queen Mary's* penetration, and behaviour, both before, and after the Murder, and from all the circumstances of the case, in every possible point of view in which, under their most favourable aspects, they can be considered, that she was entirely ignorant of it; that she was perfectly innocent; and that it did not even secretly obtain her acquiescence, especially from what previously passed at the Craigmillar Conference, from Bothwell's application for a warrant to Morton, from the ineffectual warnings she afterwards got, as stated by Sir James Melvil in his Memoirs, pp. 78, 79, not to marry Bothwell, and from her subsequent conduct; however desirous to join her defenders in, at least ostensibly, doing so, it is impossible for honest impartiality, and reason, to credit. Her negative, passive guilt, or at best culpable folly and imprudence, may indeed have many apologies. Among these may be reckoned the heat, and levity of blood, communicated by her parents, with her own constitutional ardour, rash indiscretion, boldness, sprightliness, and sensibility. It is evident there can be no guilt in yielding to irresistible impulses; and that the degree of it exactly keeps pace with the operating force of the passions, compared with the controlling strength of the understanding, and of the benevolent affections. Her criminal coldness may also draw additional excuses, from the unprincipled religion, to which she was so naturally, amiably, and violently devoted, increased by a loose education. From her sixth year, in 1548, at the Court of Henry II. till his death in 1559, and that of his son her husband Francis II. in 1560, before her departure in 1561, she spent her whole time amidst the profligate, seductive, gay examples, constantly before her inexperienced youth, in France, where her heart evidently remained. Her conduct may be much alleviated and softened, perhaps, by ingenuity; but the stain it has left cannot, by the most vigorous exertions of zeal, with all the exculpatory circumstances, which, so-

loured by beauty, rank, spirit, wit, accomplishments, gallantry, and fashion, have secured to their persecuted sovereign so many advocates, be completely wiped off. At the same time, however, it must be confessed, in extenuation of her passive guilt itself, that never before, nor since, not even in the person of the *late* Queen of France, so like in many respects, was ever so captivating a woman, reluctantly removed from a gay pinnacle of splendour, genial warmth, and elegance, and that, too, at so unfortunate a period, to so difficult and dangerous, so horribly shocking, and deranging a seat. Never before was female royalty ever enthroned so unwillingly and unsuitably, upon a dismal, unsheltered, rugged rock, exposed to the perpetual, surly, growling storms of faction, and fanaticism; the freezing rigidity of presbyterian austerity; the chilling snows of bigoted, unprovoked, unmerited, sarcastic insults; and the snares of false friends, profligate lovers, loose designing women, and unfeeling foes, amidst savage bears, wolves, and foxes.[8] The religion in which she was educated was detested, and herself persecuted for innocently adhering to it. With the frank unfettered foreign manners, and gay accomplishments she had also been taught from her infancy, in her own dominions, she was treated as if an intruding, unwelcome stranger; and left there almost destitute of guard or guide, of a suitable sincere adviser, able to defend her youthful inexperienced simplicity, and feminine weakness, from danger and deceit, or her character against concerted calumnies.

The aim of the following attempt is, to endeavour to try the consistency and truth of this, apparently, the most authentic and just, middle opinion, as to QUEEN MARY's guilt, with the recorded facts in support of it; not entirely rejecting, even, the circumstances and sentiments, in the gross, vulgar *Letters* and *Love Verses*,

---

[8] What a contrast, in itself, its neighbourhood, and in its inhabitants, to its picture, then, does *Edinburgh* exhibit *now*, A. D. 1830! Owing to the beauty, variety in sea and land, and richness of the surrounding scenery; the romantic, picturesque appearance of its site; the magnificent splendour and classic elegance of its light freestone numerous public and private buildings, with blue leaded and slated roofs; and the learning, character, taste, and cleanliness of its present inhabitants; for *Auld Reekie*, it has generally, and justly, within these fifty years, been called THE ATHENS OF THE NORTH.

ascribed to this triply sovereign, elegantly accomplished and ill fated beauty; by realizing, and subjecting them to the test of dramatic rules.

Considered as a POEM, it may be objected to this essay, that the sentiments and stile of the dialogues are not sufficiently elevated, studied, embellished, figurative, and rich enough, when compared with many other tragedies; and that the structure of the story, or mechanical part, is too inartificial and simple, containing nothing to puzzle and surprise, romantic and wonderful. Merely viewed as a poem, a production of the fancy, unfettered and free, perhaps these strictures might have weight with those who prefer the meretricious tricks of premeditated contrivances, to probability, the expressions of poetical execution to those of nature; but, in a succession of dialogues, and incidents, where the personages, although with becoming dignity, and, it is most likely, with much more than they really possessed, speak, and act, as, directed by history, it is to be supposed they, not a poet, would speak, and act, in the situations, according to their different ranks, and characters, in which they are represented, so as to excite, not wonder, but interest, undoubtedly, if it is the highest excellence of the Drama to interest by a faithful exhibition of nature—to shew her *veluti in speculo*—the less of laboured, ornamented mechanism, or art, in its interlocutions, or of studied intrigue, or trick, for the use of the stage, is apparent in its plot, so much the better. The loaded, figurative, theatrical dialogue, so common, or the pompous luxuriance of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, however suitable to *it*, would be, and in some plays is, as ridiculous, when used to express, colloquially, merely human sentiments, and human language, as now existing, even in the most unusual, and elevated scenes and characters, as it is when burlesqued, in the *Cyder* or *Splendid Shilling* of Philips. Instead, as intended, of being tragic, in real life, after excluding every thing like serious interest and sympathy, nothing could be represented more comic, ludicrous, eccentric, preposterous, and laughable, than to hear two or more personages, however exalted, or, to appearance, deeply affected, the more the better for the humorous effect, talking in heroics, full of tropes, figures, metaphors, and similes, as the natural ex-

pression of mournful emotions and passions, of grief and sorrow.

Johnson, as with regard to pastoral poetry, on every occasion where he meets with it, professes to despise and detest blank verse. In his *Life of Mallet*, after pointing out the beauties of *Amyntor and Theodora*, he adds, in a sentence by itself, "But it is blank verse." One should naturally expect from this that he would avoid, and never have recourse to blank verse himself. How far, however, he is from doing this, appears in the measure of the drama he has written. He has endeavoured even to add to its faults; and, in his *Rambler*, Nos. 88 and 125, in place of proposing at once, either to adopt prose, or to roughen and lower the style so as to bring it nearer to the standard of nature, he recommends the occasional use of the incorrect, clumsy, artificial, drawling, and weakening hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables, in blank verse in tragedies, merely that their measure may be brought, "by that relaxation of metrical rigour, *nearer to prose*." In his *Life of Fenton*, he again recommends redundant terminations; and he proves his sincerity by the number of them in his own tragedy, *Irene*. From carelessness, convenience, or necessity, they occur in Shakespeare. Addison courts them as beauties in his *Cato*, and, with Rowe, seems to have been Johnson's model. But, even in Rowe, they are unmusical and heavy; unfortunately, too, without being recommended in the least, as supposed, by the advantage erroneously ascribed to them; for the hypermetrical lines are, in reality, no "nearer to prose" than the rest. This is undeniably proved by the *Rambler* himself. Notwithstanding of the abounding use of these, in delivering his mild, though often misplaced morality, with spiritless, "unaffecting elegance," by Addison in his tragedy, he writes in his *Life*, that "his lines are very smooth in "Rosamond, and *too smooth*," too far from prose, "in "*Cato*." Let any person carefully peruse that beautiful drama, *The Mourning Bride* of Congreve, and he will find plenty of impressive lines sufficiently prosaic, without superfluous redundancies, as the word itself implies, and more so than Addison, Rowe, or Johnson, with them. They are frequently to be found in Shakspeare, amongst

his other licences, but apparently more from accident than design. They only increase the multitude of the wild, rugged irregularities, by which they are concealed, and escape from censure, amidst the irresistible attractions, delights, and gigantic wonders of this "mighty genius."[8] The hypermetrical line is seldom admissible, but at the close of a sentence or paragraph; and then, merely as a licence only excused by some advantage attending its use, not attainable without it. In other cases, it introduces a still more unwelcome obstruction to the expected connecting flow of the line into that by which it is immediately followed, and even in these it has always an enfeebling, an unfinished effect, to terminate a paragraph or sentence, as if dragging a tail after it, with a short syllable.

In his *Rambler*, after pointing out the absurdities to be found in Dryden's tragedies, Johnson farther observes: "The later tragedies, indeed, have faults of "another kind, than the admission of buffoonery and "meanness into their most serious interlocutions, perhaps "*more destructive to delight*, though less open to cen-"sure. The perpetual tumour of phrase with which "every thought is now expressed by every personage; "the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and "the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has *taken* "*away* from our present writers *almost all that dominion* "*over the passions* which was the boast of their prede-"cessors." By a strange inconsistent perplexity of opinion, after proposing, as an improvement, to bring the blank verse of tragedy "*nearer to prose*," and objecting to its "perpetual *tumour of phrase*," in his usual dogmatical style, in opposition to the practice of his idol Shakespeare, he asserts, in the *Life of Somerville*, that "if blank verse "be not *tumid* and gorgeous, it is crippled prose; and fa-"miliar images in laboured language have nothing to re-"commend them but absurd novelty, which, wanting the "attractions of *nature*, cannot please long:" Yet, in his *Life of Milton*, he writes: "Blank verse, said an in-"genious critic, seems to be verse only to the *eye*;" but, in tragedy, from the breaking of the lines by the dialogues,

[8] Johnson.

it is frequently not even verse to the eye; and if read or spoken well on the stage, yet less is it so to the *ear*. Though still, notwithstanding of this repetition, by an able from an "ingenious critic," the measure and sound continue clearly to distinguish blank verse from prose, and to point it out as verse, both to the eye and ear. Even the Ossian of *Macpherson*, in spite of its prosaic appearance, is felt to be a poem; because it has all the measure, melody, imagery, and passion, that is required to render it such. However, from the preceding remarks, it necessarily follows, that blank verse, in the *Drama*, must be improper and injurious to its essential effects, in representing nature, and affecting the passions, if carried to a mechanical and laboured degree of exactness, and yet more, if accompanied with a load of artificial enrichments, or with the lofty luxuriant flights, and other requisites of the epic muse. It ought only to be adopted in so far as, to increase the interest, it gives a certain elevating ease and harmony to the language of nature, that sweetens and raises it in elegance and dignity somewhat above the harsh, low level of common prose.

Lord Kames, in the best of his philosophical works, his *Elements of Criticism*, when treating of versification, writes: "It is universally agreed, that the loftiness of "Milton's style supports admirably the sublimity of his "subject, and it is not less certain that the loftiness of his "style arises chiefly from inversion. Shakespeare deals "little in inversion; but his blank verse, being a sort of "*measured prose*, is perfectly well adapted to the *stage*, "where laboured inversion is *extremely improper*, because "in *dialogue* it *never can be natural*." In this, both observation, and reflection, will readily acquiesce, in preference to the mere mechanical wonder-raising merits of laboured poetic execution, and stage effects; but it is believed neither, on due consideration, will support his doctrine, in the section of the same ingenious book on *Emotions caused by Fiction*, when applied to the Drama, namely, that "we are little moved by any distant event;" and that "it makes no difference whether a subject be a "fable, or a true history;" In other words, that history excites the same interest with fable, travels with tales, and truth with fiction or falsehood. That these were not, by

any means, the opinions of our earliest tragic poets, is evident from their favourite subjects, their conspicuousness, though so very remote, being doubtless occasioned by their importance, splendour, and magnitude, which, under the name of *mysteries*, acted on holidays, were borrowed from those of the *Pentateuch* of Moses, recording, on our globe at least, the most distant events possible. In 1390, and again in 1409, in the reign of Henry the Fourth of England, the parish clerks of London, for eight days successively, acted a play concerning the *Creation of the World*. Milton wrote his *Samson Agonistes*, and had begun a tragedy, or mystery, on *Paradise Lost*. That such, too, with the exception of his *Henry the Eighth*, were not the opinions of Shakspeare, his plays incontestably prove, their plots being generally chosen from history, on principles in direct opposition to them, the soundness of which are demonstrated by the effects they produce, resting on experience, the only sure foundation in philosophy, and of truth. Dr Blair, in his *Lectures on Rhetoric*, says: "The tragic poet may take his "subject from any period that is agreeable to him, how-"ever remote in time." It is generally allowed, that recent events, however much that circumstance in their representation may increase their value afterwards, perhaps in illustration of the proverb, that *familiarity breeds contempt*, from their too great intimacy, being too commonly, minutely, and well known, and thus leaving nothing for curiosity to learn, or the imagination to work and amuse itself upon, are not at all acceptable to the epic or tragic muse. It is admitted, too, that the interest excited by either is much increased by the additional sympathetic influence and weight of truth in history; rising in proportion to the celebrity and importance of the recorded action she is, through her, enabled to revive and represent, and the nearness of our own national or other connexion with it. Indeed, above any, this seems to be by far the most interesting, rational, suitable, and dignified application of the unequalled powers, more especially of tragedy. "In or-"der," says Dr Blair, again, in his *Lectures*, "to pro-"mote that impression of probability which is so neces-"sary to the success of tragedy, some critics have requir-"ed that the subject should never be a pure fiction in-

"vented by the poet, but built on *real history*, or "known facts. Such indeed were generally, if not al-"ways, the subjects of the Greek tragedians." In this respect she restores, as it were to life and existence, the great events, of which otherwise, except from a picture, which can recal but one scene, we could only have a feeble conception; thus heightening the value of the contrivance by which they are again brought before us, in proportion to the concern we have in them, their moment, their grandeur, their distances, and the consequent difficulties attending it. Even by Lord Kames's own theory, of "*ideal presence*," in this section, it appears to be inconsistent to advance the above quoted assertions; for the more remote the event, and the greater the difficulty of conceiving it present, is, we must of course be the more entertained, instructed, and moved by the embodied exhibitions of it, if agreeable to nature; and by aiding its conceptions, the "ideal presence" must be much more perspicuous, authentic, vivid, forcible, and complete, and "our passions" more strongly "moved by reading" a tragedy, preceded, supported, and endeared by "a true "history," particularly if taken from our own records, than when founded, at second hand, on a fanciful fable, with the "slight pleasure it affords counterbalanced by "the disgust it inspires for want of truth." Accordingly, in physiology, on the appearance of a distant and seemingly important material object, our senses are immediately attracted from those that are familiar, from being at hand; our curiosity is excited; and we are more or less strongly moved to approach, examine, and get acquainted with it, in proportion to its greater or smaller supposed degree of consequence, and of our amicable concern with it, until it is ascertained either to be a real existence, or an empty baseless deception, producing only ideal presence in the brain, and the mere offspring of the imagination, founded on falsehood, void of information, inapplicable to use, and unworthy of farther regard.

In this endeavour to accommodate the opposing opinions on the most celebrated event in Scottish history, by steering a middle course, the facts have been impartially collected into one view of it; apparently the only one to which they can all be fairly reconciled, without strain or

perversion. To these the rules of the Drama, as a test, by recalling and realising them, and as it were converting their ideal into real presence, being the most agreeable mode of effecting this purpose, with the characters introduced, have been carefully, and indeed, as to the unities of time and action, easily adjusted.

Under the authority of *Paris's First Confession*, that, at the time of Darnly's murder, there was a tempest, and great thunder clap, *Goodall*, p. 143, and of what Bothwell said to Sir James Melvil immediately after the night of the murder, as mentioned in page 78 of the *Memoires*, that "thunder had come out of the sky, and had burnt the "King's house," the introduction of the storm is sanctioned by history. A thunder storm in Scotland, early in February, is not uncommon.[10]

The Queen's visit to a witch in a *dream*, as the most unexceptionable mode of exhibiting the dreadful *consequences* of the event, and completing its history, is, therefore, the only incident of importance that is the offspring of fiction. Even her having in reality consulted a Witch, would, however, have been sufficiently within the bounds of probability, when founded on her actual secret temporary disappearance, nobody knew wherefore, or to what place, and on the superstitious beliefs and practices of those times, among all ranks, even in her Son's reign,[11] who himself wrote a book on witchcraft, as is well known; and, as Melvil in his *Memoires*, page 156, testifies,

---

[10] "The upper half of the great spire of the Cathedral at Glasgow was struck off by lightning in winter. Many churches, and parti-"cularly the church of Aberbrothock, were fired by lightning in "winter." Sir D. Dalr. Ann. A. D. 1272. Misc. Occur. to vol. 1. Such a storm in Edinburgh of lightning, thunder, wind, and hail, actually was experienced there, on the first night of January 1825.

[11] Melvil's Memoires, pp. 118, 180, 194, 195, evidencing that Mortoune consulted Oracles, and his own, as well as the universal confidence in the existence of witches, fairies, and familiar spirits. See also *Spotswood's Church History* of those times, for proofs of the credulity of the wise and learned archbishop of St Andrew's himself, as to these gifted beings and their powers. Though witchcraft is so wittily ridiculed by Butler, in his Hudibras; even after the Restoration, the learned Dr Casaubon, prebend at Canterbury, published a Defence of the existence of Witches, and a true and faithful relation of what passed, many years, between Dr John Dee and some spirits.

was also a dreamer of dreams. He mentions one relating to William the first Earl of Gowrie, when at Dundee, before he, at the instigation of Arran to get his lands, was seized and beheaded.

It is hoped the parts will thus be found consistent with authentic records, and with each other; and the whole supporting the conclusions intended to be drawn from it, on the causes of Lord Darnly's death, and the extent of Queen Mary's guilt, so variously represented, in that superlatively famous and infamous tragical transaction, rendered, if possible, still more remarkable, by the valuable moral precepts it so strikingly exemplifies, in its career and effects.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

HENRY STEWART, LORD DARNLY; *King of Scots.*

STEWART, EARL OF ATHOL; *related to the King. A Catholic, and one of the Queen's Ministers.*

EARL OF SUTHERLAND; *A Catholic, and one of the Queen's Ministers.*

JAMES STEWART, EARL OF MURRAY; *Natural Brother to the Queen, and late prior of St Andrews. Out of favour with the Queen; in the interests of Queen Elizabeth; and a leader in the Reformation.*

JAMES DOUGLAS, EARL OF MORTOUNE; *Chancellor. In Elizabeth's interests, and connected with Murray, and the Reformation.*

WILLIAM MAITLAND, *of Leddington; Secretary: Son to Sir Richard Maitland, Lord Privy Seal, the poet, and Lord of Session; connected with Murray and Mortoune.*

Conspirators.

- JAMES HEPBORNE, EARL OF BOTHWELL; *Hereditary High Admiral, and Lieutenant-General and Warden of the Marches; the Queen's favourite Minister.*
- EARL OF HUNTLY; *brother-in-law to Bothwell. A Catholic; one of the Queen's Ministers; and in Bothwell's councils.*
- LORD SEATON; *with Huntly, in Bothwell's councils. A Catholic; one of the Queen's Ministers; and cousin to Maitland.*
- ARCHIBALD DOUGLASS, *parson of Glasgow; and cousin to Mortoune.*
- SIR JAMES BALFOUR, *deputy-governor of Edinburgh Castle.*
- GILBERT BALFOUR; *brother to Sir James; and governor of Kirkwall Castle, in Orkney.*
- ROBERT; *(properly,)* JAMES BALFOUR; *their cousin, Clerk Register; and owner of the King's lodgings.*
- JAMES, *(properly)*; alias JOHN ORMISTOUNE, *of that Ilk*; alias THE LAIRD OF ORMISTOUNE, alias BLACK ORMISTOUNE, alias BLACK JOHN.
- ROBERT, alias HOB ORMISTOUNE, *his uncle.*
- JOHN HAY, *of Talla; a dependant on Bothwell.*
- JOHN HEPBORNE, alias JOHN OF BOWTOWN; *a retainer on Bothwell.*
- CAPTAIN WILLIAM BLACKADDER; *a pirate, and client of Bothwell's.*
- NICHOLAS HUBERT, alias FRENCH PARIS; *formerly servant to Bothwell; now with the Queen.*
- ARCHIBALD BETON; *with Hubert, Esquire of the Queen's chamber-door.*
- GEORGE DALGLEISH; *chamberlain to Bothwell.*
- BONKLE; *cellarer to the King.*
- POWRIE; *porter to Bothwell.*
- GAIRNER; BINNING; *servants to Archibald Douglas.*

SIR JAMES MELVIL; *a privy councillor, gentleman of the chamber to the Queen, and late ambassador to England.*
THOMAS CRAWFORD; *dependant on the Earl of Lennox, and confidant to his son the King.*
ABERNETHY; *physician to the King.*
TAILZEOUR, MACKAIG, GLEN, NELSON, } *Grooms of the King's chamber.*
Confidential attendant on the Earl of Murray.
Domestic, or retainer, to the Earl of Athol.
A spy; and other conspirators.

WOMEN.

MARY STEWART, *Queen of Scots.*
COUNTESS OF ARGYL; *natural sister to the Queen.*
——— OF HUNTLY.
——— OF ATHOL.
——— OF SUTHERLAND.
LADY RERES; *formerly mistress to Bothwell; in the Queen's confidence.*
Attendants.

SCENE,—*Halyruidhouse.*———*Act. IV. Kirk-a-Field.*
TIME,—*Twelve hours.*

HENRY, LORD DARNLY,

KING OF SCOTS;

A HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

The Earl of Murray hearing of the state
In which his Countess lies, in danger great;
From sea and storm, regardless of his life,
Applies for leave from court to go to Fife.
The Queen consents; but, ere he takes the road,
To cross the foaming frith for his abode,
The Earl of Mortoune, and shrewd Leddington,
His friends, he meets, and counsels them, when gone,
To "The Religion," and themselves, that true
They be, and the most prudent plans pursue,
As suited best these purposes to serve,
To implicate her Grace, without reserve,
Should his suspicions, and reports agree
With the events which they surmise to be
Contemplated in love, by secret plots
'Twixt Bothwell's Earl, and Mary Queen of Scots.

SCENE—*An Antechamber in Hallyruidhouse, Edinburgh.*

MURRAY *entering, and holding a letter; followed by his Confidential Attendant.*

(The manners and tones of the Reformers, and especially of MURRAY, *blunt, rough, formal, sanctimonious, and puritanical; as also their dresses.)*

Mur. The letter must have these embellishments
From foreign aid, to pass it properly;
To make the danger equal to the haste;
Th' alarms account for such precipitance.

With greetings to her Majesty, request
That I may have an audience publicly;
And gracious leave to wait upon her Grace
In presence, while she holds her royal state.
Urge, 'tis a cause of intimate concern
To my domestic happiness.[1] The whole
You know. So, with thy practised pencil, first,
Then, trace the tale, that all my finishings
May take effect upon the cheated sense:
Success depends upon the full belief
In their reality. I wait you here.
Ere you return, exchange your courtly dress;
Your ruff, light doublet, scarf, white hose, and shoes;
For bonnet, cloak, coarse gabardine, and boots;
For travelling suit, such as this day requires.

[*Exit attendant.*

(*Folding and putting up the letter.*)

Twice by the Queen; by nature baffled now;
Since she 'll not part with him; if I this knot,
This double knot, cannot untie, I 'll make
It thus untie itself. As I have gained
The Church, regain the reins of State by deep
And desperate policy. A smaller bribe,
Encouraged less, had been enough t' have led,
In these aspiring, lawless, rugged times,
As far a friend to the The Religion's cause
By means direct. But this, as sure, is safe,
If managed right. Let fools the dagger use,
Who nor can draw, nor wield, great justice' sword;
Nor turn its powerful point against their foes.
I 'll him that wrested favour from me first,
While he atones, make, too, afford the mean,
Already done in part by Rizew's death,
Of thus recovering what I lost, and more.
Purblind is he who cannot see so far;
And weak the hand which cannot thus direct
This weapon to its object, when in view;
Inviting, that his grasp; this, in his reach.
Through me, in safety, once she masses said.
When left alone, unpropped, unskreened, against
Reform, we 'll see what she can do herself:

---

[1] Buchanan's Hist. Lib. 18.—Keith, p. 365.—Tytler, p. 248.

Alone; herself; with all her priestly guides,
And monks, and images idolatrous,
And crowds of gallic foreigners, so great
As to have given the place in which they lodge,
Craigmillar near, the name of *Little France.*

ATTENDANT; *habited for the road.*

Attend. Her Majesty, with greetings kind, desired
T' acquaint your lordship she is much inclined
To give a friendly hearing to your wish.
She placed reliance in each circumstance,
As, step by step, I traced my own reports.
Though still, if not deceived, I thought she seemed,
Through Bothwell's obstacles, to stay your course,
Solicitous you should not stir *to-day.*[2]
In presence, you 'll be presently received;
If, in a little, you present yourself.
Mur. You saw the horses shipped at Leith, I hope?
Attend. I did, with care; before I came t' attend
Your Lordship here.—Though scarce I could prevail
Upon a hand t' accept the bribe; it looks
So terrible. 'Twas only shame to rank
Their lives with yours that struck them dumb. You [make
The hardiest tar despise himself, and seem
Unworthy of his trade, unfit to face
His element. Inchkeith has disappeared,
By breakers hid; and scarcely, through the foam,
Was to be seen, as in a mist, its fort,
The Dowager of Guise's troops from France
Late' garrisoned, to force us to be slaves,
And catholics.
Mur. Yes, slaves to catholics;
To papists, foreigners, idolaters;
To France! To be its stepping-stones to cross
The Tweed; her Grace's claim its vehicle
To England's throne.[3] All Britain to be slaves
To captains, and confessing spies; to crouch,
To be dragooned into submissive quiet;

---

[2] Buch. Hist. L. 18.
[3] Robertson's Hist. B. 2. A. D. 1559.

To kiss the iron rod of despotism;
An idol's toe; fall down to images;
For bread, the staff of life, be cannibals,
Eat human flesh, drink blood, and bellow mass;
Hoodwinked and crushed, be kept in bondage, blind,
By ignorance.—Then now, you have, silenced,
No fort to fear.

Attend. Perhaps another time
Might do as well; so strange appearances!
The sailors even thought the billows groaned
Beneath the howling blast; and falt'ring said,
They had observed himself, the hoary king,
With warning trident pointing to the shore,
Rise in each fleecy wave to fright them off!
They figured that, so heated were their brains,
A cloud they marked resembled much a crown
Inverted, and the darkness from the east,
A pall on which it lay! Some thought they eyed
A streaming meteor like a sceptred globe:
Right o'er the fortress of Dunbar it fell,
When blown as 't were from out the diadem;
There blazing hung above its battlements
A while; then, sudden, dropped into the sea!
At intervals, in blinks, they blue lights saw,
Between, and o'er the waves convulsed; and heard
The signal firings dull of deep distress,
Sent from the deep below, and from the roads!
So ominous the threat'ning elements
Appear in their imaginations, roused
By frequency of wild occurrences,
That scarce an honest seaman, there, but, once,
Might have supplied, at Rome, an augur's place,
And filled it well!

Mur. A priest-rid gossip's place
In popish Rome thou would'st have said. All those,
Exposed to dangers oft, are given to whims,
And lunacies, and auguries; and more
Than those, I find, from the embellishments
You 've added to their fantasies, with them
To aid the winds and threatening waves,
To terrors, and to vapours raise. But hence
With fooleries—if fooleries they be—(*Aside*)

And superstitious fears ridiculous.
If I, from either shore, from the Hawk-hill,
The guarded citadel of Leith, and fort
Upon the insulated rock to hold
The frith, with the raw friendly force of kind
Elizabeth, have braved the shock of french
Artillery directed by the bold
And tried and veteran troops of Francis First
And Henry Second's reigns, to save the realm,
To guard the church and state from foreign yoke,
Not Scotland's only, but Great Britain's rights,
And quash their *english* schemes through our young [Queen,
Defying all their superstitions too,[4]
Think'st thou I 'd now, with fear and trembling, fly
From the forebodings of a winter cloud,
Accompanied with blustering puffs of wind?
Await, till I return, within the gate,
Behind the chapel tower, toward the west
Its belfry that supports. I 'll soon be back
From other business, when I 've got my leave.
The best return, for trust, is faithfulness.
I shall expect you at the gate at three. *(Exit Murray.*
Attend. I shall attend most punctually there.—
" *Trust*" you may call it! I know 'tis trust in *you*;
But, in *another*, serv'd so honestly,
'Twere cautious diffidence. 'Tis true I 've spread
Just now, in confidence, a false report,
As to the colourings at least untrue,
To serve his views in getting leave. But still,
Whate'er, beyond the motives he 's assigned,
Shall happen else, must seem mysterious all,
Of doubtful inference applied to him;
So plausible his reasons, even to me.
There is a sympathy in enterprize,
Supported by sagacity, that shoves
Reflection out, and draws us after it.
In some, his high demeanour, haughtiness
Austere, his rude, rough, blunt contemptuousness,
Would breed estrangement, coldness, and disgust:
But, such the influence of the brave, I 'd serve

---

[4] Roberts. Hist. B. 3. 1560.

His daring spirit sooner upon trust,
Than sneak behind an unaspiring man,
To customs wedded, and averse to change,
Who creeps along the track his fathers cleared,
Without the soul to step beyond it, lest,
By every move, the world should meliorate,
And run its course before th' appointed hour:
Who rates Reform, by giving it the names
Of innovation, faction, turbulence,
Fanaticism, sedition, anarchy;
And for its parents, illegitimate,
Sheer envy and ambition in disguise.
Still, be it so; the means must suit the times.
Allow, that envy, avarice, revenge,
Ambition, secret interest, and self,
Without the spring of generosity,
Or principle, or patriotism, direct
Our leaders of Reform, or followers;
If, for the superstitions, ignorance,
And arbitrary power of Popery,
They introduce the fertilizing rays
Of knowledge, with their produce, sure and rich,
The fruits of freedom, and prosperity,
'Tis good, though done by each to serve but self;
They had the courage to attempt the task.—
But now, 'tis almost time I take my stand. (Exit Attendant.

MORTOUNE, *and* MAITLAND *of Lethington; in haste; covered from the weather.*

Mort. Ho, there!—Is n't that the trusty servant gone,
Of him we 're now in quest of?—By his dress,
'T would seem, he means him to accompany,
In journeying, too.
Leth. The same! Just on the wing
T' attend him now. We must not let him go.
I 'll after him, while you wait here. *(Exit Lethington.*
Mort. I will.
Yes, marry, and 't is well proposed, methinks:
For, save on pressing need, I 've little mind,
So suddenly, again to face the storm.
Though I suspect he knows of what 's to come,

As well as Lethington and I,[5] this thought,
So full of rashness, and of jeopardy,
Of Murray's flying on so rough a day,
At peril of his life, must be with care
Inquired into; lest from some other cause
Than that reported it originates.
His brain, like stomach sound, from all of use
Keen appetite supplies, selects, retains,
And will digest whatever it receives,
In secret, solely for its owner's need.
If aught of worth 's disclosed, 't will be to us,
His brethren of the Congregation, joined,
To be the ruling elders of the Kirk,
Supplant the Pope, here bait his leaden bulls,
With Knox's deafening trump their bellowings blast,
And french ambition; policy 's our pledge:
His interest 't is; methinks he will redeem 't.

LETHINGTON, *without.*

Did he not say, on me he meant to call
Before his setting out.

ATTENDANT, *re-entering with* LETHINGTON.

Attend. Not, that I heard.
Though, if I right remember, he let fall
A purpose of some business ere he went;
But of what nature I am ignorant.—
I greet you well my Lord of Mortoune; scarce
I knew you, under the deep coverings close
This threatening tempest renders requisite;
Your height and breadth they have so much increased.
Mort. Marry, methinks they have; when under them
My high crowned hat is placed:[6] yet it may hap',
If through your wit you 've sense enough to see 't,
My height and breadth can these additions bear,
And still no giant make me after all.

---

[5] Rob. B. 5. Oct. 3. 1569. Append. Arch. Douglas's Let. to the Qu. of Scots.—Tytl. p. 252.
[6] Vertue's Illustrious Heads; portrait of the *Earl of Morton.*

In height, beside the king I 'd be a dwarf.—
I thank you friend; but why this horseman's dress,
As if for journey of continuance?
Some matter, sure, of fearful consequence
Must be the cause, when, as you say, such care
Is requisite, even when a person stirs
Abroad within the limits of the town!
Attend. 'T is to attend the Earl my master home.
He means, this afternoon, devoid of fear,
To charge the billows of the raging Firth;
Defy all opposition, and attain
His castle, ere the morning's sun shall rise.
As for myself, I own, if 't were not shame
To estimate my life with his, besides
The dread of being charged with cowardice,
And treachery, I would remain behind.
He is just gone, to get his leave at Court.
Mort. But, whence the cause of such precipitance?
Although, nor backward, cold, nor timid deemed,
As, by my troth, I value light and life,
I 'd scarce for aught, this night, to *Calder Cleir!*
Attend. From family distress it takes its course;
For he has heard, from such authority
As cannot fail of confirmation sure
Upon arrival, that his honoured wife,
Still weak from the effects of a late birth,
Was seized, some days ago, with the strong proofs
Of wild delirium. The leading fact;
The Countess's miscarriage, there, from Fife
Already 's verified, by letter got,
This afternoon, while on his way to church.[7]
Leth. If this the cause, 't is well. But still we wish
To have an interview before he goes.
Does he return again to this from Court? [told
Attend. At three o'clock; some half hour hence, he
Me to attend him at the northern gate,
Beside the royal chapel's belfry tower.
If then, a little while before, you 'll come
Through it to this apartment, I 'll remain,
And tell him faithfully, that you are here.

---

[7] Buch. L. 18.

Mort. Accept our thanks. We 'll certainly attend
Upon him ere the clock shall strike.—'Tis well;
For Athol, though related to the King,
A favourite courtier,[8] estimated high
For popish zeal and loyalty as Ross
Her Grace's champion, this way comes. Adieu.
Leth. You 're certain of the hour and place?
Attend. Of both. *(Exit Attendant.*
Leth. Then, ere that time, t' accompany you here,
I 'll at your lordship's lodgings call.— *(Exit Mortoune.*
'Twere wise
To keep in sight until th' intended Masque
At Court; and with some loyal friend secure
Against suspicion. None I see more fit,
Through his connexion with the King by blood,
Dislike to the late prior and reform,
And patriotic plain fidelity,
Than Athol's self, the Queen's own councillor.[9]
It will from mischief likewise him remove;
At least, as wished, while he remains with me;
From offering, or from suffering violence.[10]

ATHOL.

My Lord, I greet you well.
Athol. All happiness
Be with my friend.
Leth. It is most fortunate
We 've met. 'Twill save my sending to request
Your company at supper, ere the Masque
To night.[11] I have some things of consequence
To say, that time require. I cannot now
Convey them to your ear. I leisure want;
As hurry hence I must; and after wait
Upon the Queen.
Athol. You have, wise Lethington,

---

[8] Spotswood, Lib. 4. An. 1565, 1566, pp. 196, 197.—Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[9] Melvil's Memoires, pp. 30, 85, 87, 100.—Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1567, p. 211.—Rob. B. 3. 1565. B. 4. 1566.
[10] Rob. B. 4. 1567.—Tytl. p. 227.
[11] Calderw.—Goodall, v. 1. p. 269.—Tytl. P. 2. c. 3.

When not engaged against our catholic faith,[12]
To use your learning, and your eloquence
Injuriously, or for its enemies,
My countenance, and may, as wished, expect
My company; though 'twere a compliment;
Though I had warring elements to fight,
Even more ungracious yet than those without.
'Twould ill become a hardy Scot to flinch,
Or from a foe, or storm, to serve a friend.

Leth. Their fury unappeased, the favour marks;
Which I would not have ventur'd to request,
Were I at liberty, from state affairs,
To be from home, to wait on you.

Athol. You need
Not plead, you know, with me a trifling point
Of ceremony; but reserv 't, to please
Some useless, foppish, fribble of the Court,
With scented love-lock dyed; with puckered ruff;
With satin doublet, stiffened, striped, and laced;
Legs, standing, like two flaming arrow shafts,
Mis-shot by Cupid, sticking in the ground;
And full-blown roses blushing o'er his shoes;
On gala day. Meantime, as you 're in haste,
Farewell.— *(Exit Lethington.*
We 're both alike her Grace's friends.
Then, why should malice, or distrust, result
From difference in opinion? though the cause
Religion's self, much more if aught of less
Concern. Our prior, the deserter, he,
The ruling renegado so austere,
Even Murray, was so friendly to the Queen,
From policy, perhaps, to please her Grace,
While she submitted to his influence,
As to obtain for her the liberty
Of celebrating mass, with all her suite,
In her own palace chapel privately
In peace, when, too, his power was at its height;[13]
In spite of the remonstrances of Knox;
The clamours of the elders, and the flocks
Of proselyte apostates to Reform;

---

[12] Rob. B. 3. 1565. B. 4. 1567.
[13] Rob. B. 3. 1561.

And the guid Earl's own interested seal,
Through it, for popularity and power;
Ere Lennox, and his son, my relatives;
His son, unfortunately fortunate;
Arrived, to win her Majesty, and thrust
Him out. Its cause, howe'er, be what it might;
Or secret selfish policy, or not;
'Twas toleration still, humanity
Will praise.—It sounds the voice of Sutherland.—
The same.

SUTHERLAND.

My friend, thrice welcome from the storm,
Though late!—The council is broke up long since.
Suth. I scarce expected to arrive in time.—
How beautiful the sun this morning looked.
Bright from the Frith he rose! Half sunk his orb,
Emerged when but a half, I saw him first.
The clouds around, like liquid gold intense
In heated furnace, shone, luxuriance rich,
While o'er the main a beam shot brilliant far,
Its magic touch converting, as it rose
To view, the summit of each rolling surf
Into a transient light!
Athol. Even so I saw 't,
And stood admiring: for, of all the scenes
Of dazzling pomp, it is the first; till full,
From Thetis' lap, he rose a perfect globe!
A thousand dancing lights, as you observe,
Upon the sea produced a constant change;
Excepting where the insulated Fort,
A Lazaretto once, contrasting dark,
The blaze diverted from the waves behind,
And stretched its lengthened shadow up the Firth.
Fife's distant coast retired, Inch Keith beyond,
In melting purple winding off. The plain,
This shore indents with varied tints, spread round
Our bay; and, o'er the gleaming chapel reared,
Above the mead, upon the rock detached,
With the adjoining hermitage and well,
Toward the west below, upon the same,
His glowing rays stole up the hill behind;

Dispelled the lingering mists; pierced through the clouds;
Gilt all its crags; and glittered on the top.

Suth. How strange, so bright a morning should give birth
To such a day! For scarce had he arrived
At his meridian splendour, o'er the vale
Of Lothus, and of Pictland, when appeared,
Afar, in front, along the level line
Of the horizon, where the open sea
Surrounds the isle of May, scarce visible
E'en when the air is clear, or, when obscure,
Its blazing beacon tower is flaming high;
Blest warner, by benighted travellers!
A darkness to the south of east, beyond
The Bass. It gradual rose, and drew a wide
And sable curtain up the freshening Firth,
Advancing to the west. Within an hour,
Or somewhat shorter space; long ere the sun,
More slow, behind our winged castle proud,[14]
Basaltic, watchful, towering high, between
And ridged Dunaiden sloping east to this,
Would have intrenched, and given to either lake
A ruddy salutation, it had close
Enveloped all around, and shut him out,
As moonless nights o'erspread the sombred skies,
O'ercast, o'ershade, and shroud in gloom the earth.[15]
Still black as Erebus it seems abroad,
And feels unusual. Then, at intervals,
By those addicted most to tales of witchery,
Uncommon sounds are heard confusedly throng;
From Fife, or from North-Berwick Kirk perhaps,
Of wizards, here with ours on mischief met;[16]
Like voices mixt, and strange outlandish tongues,
In th' air above, as if, from height immense,
Of plotting fiends in hot debate on ills
To come!

Athol. Some mischief 's brooding sure; for, oft

---

[14] "In the gaelic language, Edinburgh is uniformly termed "*Dun aiden*, which is the same thing as *castrum alatum*." Sir D. Dalr. Ann. Remarks on the Hist. of Scotl. chap. 2.

[15] "And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp."
SHAKSP. *Macbeth*, Act ii. sc. 6.

[16] Melv. pp. 194, 195.

As I have looked, it always worse appears;
And frowns, and howls, and deepens horrible!
With fiends, wild wandering fires, and phantoms seen,
The superstitious citizens alarm:
" No natural exhalation in the sky,
" No 'scape of nature, no distempered day,
" No common wind, no 'customed event,
" But," straight, " they pluck away its natural cause;
" And call them meteors, prodigies, and signs,
" Abortives, and presages, tongues of heaven."
" Old men and beldams in the streets
" Do prophesy upon it dangerously;
" And, when they talk of him, they shake their heads,
" And whisper one another in the ear,
" And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist,
" Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,
" With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.[17]
Shrill screams of ill-presaging birds are heard,
From turrets, rocks, and spires, invisible,
By starts, the deafening, stunning blasts between.
Suth. The Queen, though credulous, is yet resolved
Upon the Masque this night, to celebrate
The nuptials of her maid, it seems. I else,
But thus to learn what I did not believe,
Although myself invited to be there,
Should scarce, my friend, have ventured here. For, know,
I hymen to attend, by gratitude,
Am bound. On Darnly's marriage with her Grace,
'T was he recalled, from Flanders brought me back,
And introduced me as before to court.[18]
If fixed, I cannot be away.
Athol. 'Tis true.
'Twas Bothwell kept her from deferring it.
And each grandee is to be present, save
Earl Murray, who, from family distress,
On leave, this instant from her Majesty,
The Palace for St Andrews left, to fly
From marriage and from masque; though at his own,[19]

---

[17] Shaksp. King John.
[18] Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[19] Whitaker, v. 3. 272.

Defying Knox's anger then avowed,[20]
First by *himself* were masques begun, in spite
Of hostile elements, and threatening squalls, [way."—[21]
"Through winds, and waves, and storms, to work his
There something, somehow, too, mysterious seemed
About his taking leave.
Suth. You know the man;
Though blunt, and open too, apparently,
His hate, apostate's hate, to popery,
Obdurate, unrelenting, pitiless,[22]
His portly port, his godly gravity
Oracular, his supercilious pride
Of bearings high, in church, and state,
His turbulent temper, black, ambitious views:
That, though he owes his honours to the Queen,
He 's still her rival, and perpetual cross;
Alike a foe to Darnly and herself.
Although a Scotsman born, its prince's son,
And brother to his country's sovereign,
Whose claims should, as his own, be dear to him,
The usurpations of Elizabeth,
Even to his sister's crown itself she wears,
Though like his title illegitimate,[23]
He basely favours, forwards, and supports;
Combined with Mortoune, sells, betrays, degrades,
To gratify themselves, without remorse,
Our independence, honour, dignity,
And glories in the humbling of her Grace.
Had she his title and her person left
To Huntly in the north, at Corrichie,
He had not crowed so loud, his rival killed,
Driven me abroad, and harrassed her at home.[24]—
But who comes here! as if, disordered, still
He struggled with the tempest?——Let him pass.
Athol. 'Tis Nicholas Hubert, Bothwell's henchman
Lord Seton's next; her Grace's now; with speed [once;
Returning to the Queen. How can her Grace

---

[20] Knox, p. 302.
[21] Addison, Cato, Act. i. sc. 3.
[22] Melv. Mem. p. 87.
[23] Melv. Mem. p. 23.—Rob. B. 2. 1559.
[24] Rob. Oct. 28. 1562.

Entrust this fellow with her errands thus;
Or slightest confidence in any thing?[25]

FRENCH PARIS, *muffled up.*

Suth. We 'll now away, and leave him to his course;
Lest he should teaze us with his impudence,
Regardless of our efforts to get free,
And grind our ears with everlasting clack[26]
From chaff-producing mill, driven by the wind;
Or we retard the answer from the Queen.
(Exeunt Athol and Sutherland.

Paris. I wish the amorous Earl had chosen a night
For this, less hostile to the messenger:
Had kept me; or entirely had resigned
Me to her Grace.—Were I the sharpest dart
The god of love e'er fitted to his bow,
From his full heterogeneous quiver, scarce
Could I with ease fly on this errand hot
'Gainst such resistance. Then, no wonder, wrapt,
By folds swelled out to owl's rotundity,
And loaded with this woolly scottish plaid,
Above a doublet-guarding gabardine,
I reel and waver still, with buffeting
So broad the storm. Yet, underneath this mawd,
This worsted bonnet, solid as a sod
Upon a grave, although oppressed, I 've life,
I 'm sharp enough. In size, in meagreness,
I 'm, every inch, a Frenchman to the bone.
A tiger with a monkey's levity,
I, Proteus-like, can any shape assume;
Appear, as if my nature had been changed,
A parrot, serpent, spaniel, as you please.
As nice a judge of beauty 's Paris' self,
I can, with like vivacity, attend
A funeral, and a wedding; ornament,
And do the honours, both upon a day,
Of maiden's scaffold, and of maiden's toilette;
Of execution, or of coronation.

---

[25] Buch. Detect.—Whitak. v. 3. 284.
[26] Rob. Dissert. on K. Henry's murder.

Can, with the same address, a lady's head
Protect from heat or rain, or carry it high,
And pale, and gashed, and reeking stuck, to stream
With blood and hair, upon a glistening pike;
Prepare a bed of down, as I the Queen's
Have oft[27]—sad change! once idolized, and Queen
Of France!—or dig it six feet deep in earth;
Warm her bright sheets, and strew her glowing couch
With blushing flowers, or pour the quick, and white,
And hot corroding lime, upon her chill,
Abused, and wan, and hacked, and headless corpse.
'T is by caprice we live, and by extremes;
Each Frenchman has the manners of a mob:
Now superstitious; sacrilegious now;
A willing slave; a mad reformer next,
All order damning like a drunken rake,
Till by a soldier drilled to crouch again;
Now rid by priests, I 'd drown them now by scores,
Though, if required, I yet their toes may kiss,
For, still, I hate an omen like the devil:
And, though I worshipped once this king, I 'm now
Among the first to send him to his grave.[28]
Hush, Frenchman!—Only to myself, I talk
In confidence, to keep my tongue in use.

---

[27] Paris's Confession.—Anders. v. 2. p. 192.—Mr Tytler thinks the improbability of this conclusive against Paris's veracity. But unfortunately it tends to support it. Among other things, "the "directions given by Edward I. for the entertainment of Elizabeth, "the wife of Robert Bruce, while his prisoner, were, that she was "to have a butler, two men servants, and *a foot-boy for her chamber*, "sober and not riotous, *to make her bed*. Three greyhounds when "she inclines to hunt," &c.—Sir D. Dalr. Ann. A. D. 1306. Robert I.; also Miscellaneous Occurrences to vol. 2.

[28] The preceding character of the French was written during the horrible massacres of the years 1792 and 1793, at the beginning of their late dreadful Revolution. Since its termination, however, by the disasters and downfall of Buonaparte, and the Restoration of Louis XVIII. the lesson they have learnt from their past sufferings, and the mildness, wisdom, and comforts of their present government, seem already to have produced so happy a change on that chastised country, as to prevent in future, it is to be hoped, this representation from ever again being applicable.—The late invasion of Spain for the restoration of Ferdinand, and the present occupation of it for his security, though founded on the erroneous principle that one independent state is entitled to interfere with the internal concerns of another, have been conducted with moderation, humanity, and good sense.

When not alone I tell another tale;
If sanctified hypocrisy requires,
More suitable for sour solemnity,
And scrupulosity, and pride, to hear;
And for her Majesty to ridicule.—
But, I must forward; lest I should offend
The Queen. Some come, might interrupt me too.
I 've orders to deliver this *(taking out a Letter)* in haste—
This fruit of beauty to my queen of love—
With secrecy: To none but to her Grace;
So, must throw off these coarse appendages,
My doublet o'er; this plaid and gabardine;
Myself uncase, ere I myself present
In pumps, white hose, and doublet, as becomes
An esquire to her Grace's chamber door,
Uncapt, uncloaked, and light as Mercury,
Jove's pimp, the witty wing-heeled messenger. *(Freeing himself from his coverings.)*

MORTOUNE *and* LETHINGTON.

Mort. 'T is Paris disencumbering himself
Ere he appears before the Queen; come back,
It may be, from the castle Mar still holds
From Bothwell, if he 's there, where soon he hopes
To be as governor.[28]
Leth. A plague, what brought
This fellow, blundering here?
Mort. Is this a place
To make his dressing-room?
Leth. He 'll not be long.
Let him proceed. He 'll fasten on us else.
'T is better he should tire himself, than us.
Be quiet. He 'll soon be done, and off.
Mort. If so,
His errand 't is, methinks, must stop his tongue,
Through deaf'ning winds, and thick disguise, in breaks,
Which seems to chatter still, if right I hear,

[28] Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1567, p. 201.—Rob. Dissert. on K. Henry's murder.

Returning to his brain its thoughts in sound,
Itself, and ears at least to exercise
And please, in passing through to whence they came.
Leth. They 'll there have room enough; and when re-
For want of wit that 's new, will use again. [paired,
Paris. 'T is well such men seem not to follow me:
To seize me else they might have been despatched.
The dreadful boot is never off my leg:
Were I as bootless as th' attempt t' unboot!
It to my conscience clings, like leather wet.
This frightful secret never leaves me safe!
What boots it then this secret to retain?
It boots, to boot, lest it should cost my life,
For present inward ease, to part with it.
Since the diable got into my breast,
I 've ne'er had peace, with aches and quakes within,
From his convulsive broils, and conscience' stings.
In trying, each, to drive the other out,
I 'm kept, between them, ever on the rack.
By th' masses said in this our Halyrud,
I wish they would but settle 't and have done;
Or one or t' other gain the mastery. [*Exit Paris.*
Leth. I think, before, we ne'er stood more in need
Of titles. Had not I, with confidence,
Announced the dignities of Chancellor,
And Secretary of the Realm, I fear
Our mufflings up would have exposed us both
To insults from the guards, before the Earl's
Attendant was observed.
Mort. Marry, they would,
Without much courtesy. Had not the storm
Accounted for our dress, even then, I doubt
Their faithful vigilance would not have slept,
Into our business set on deeper search,
Appearances against us seemed so strong.
Leth. 'T is madness, sure, or some more urgent cause
Than that reported, must make Murray cross
The Frith to night, without, or kindly moon,
Or friendly star to guide: but most my fears
Are roused by his concealing it from us.
Mort. On that, indeed, my apprehensions rest
Of something treacherous: especially
As he has managed so, at all events,

As to secure himself from any charge,
Although he should be privy to the whole.
Leth. The fact will, now, be soon explained to us.
I think I hear a bustling at the gate.

MURRAY; *equipped for a journey.*

Mur. *(as he enters)* Observe without! to see that none intrude.
—My Noble Friend; and Lethington, our best
Adviser in these most ungodly times,
So much polluted by unsanctified
Communion, wantonness, and revelry,
With upright joy I meet you both! for long
I 've searched, in vain, each place, to find you out,
Within the reach of probability.
Mort. My Lord, we understood, through vague report;
Yet, marry, that had something in 't methought,
Unlike a common flying fleeting sound;
You meant to leave your Brethren here: To shun
This evening's entertainment; and t' embark
For Fife. So wild, abrupt, and fix't a flight,
On so unfit a day, has led our zeal
To see that no misfortune has occurred,
To drive from hence the pillar of the Kirk,
In which our common interest is concerned.
Leth. Whate'er 's the cause of such a sudden scheme;
If, through construction but, 't was, we were thence
Made sufferers by staying here, we hope
To hear it all, for our security.
Mur. You shall, the whole; for with that view alone
I 've been in quest of you.——It is believed;
At least 'twas so given out; the Countess lies
Beneath a raging burning fever, mad,
Still hurrying to its crisis with increased
Alarming fury. An epistle got
This afternoon, while on my way to church,
Of a late birth, gives, too, the rumour weight.
I own, this circumstance as much I reck,
As I am reckless of the obstacles.
However, this is not the only cause.—
Mort. My Lord, excuse my eagerness—

Leth. And mine,
To get from off the rack you keep us on.
Mur. This morning, as I sat at breakfast, came,
With all the marks of perturbation strong,
His rugged rustic face, and clumsy form
Pedantic could bespeak, beneath restraint,
My learned, though severe, preceptor once,
Our factious, facile, and revengeful friend
Buchanan.[29] Had he, eastward, run, on foot,
From his first cottage on the Moss of Blane,
The Endrick up, and down the Forth, express,
To this, he scarce had breathed more difficult!
With broken utterance, he begged, in haste,
A private audience. Instantly I cleared
The room; when, with a wild distracted air,
With joy and horror mixed, he said he just
Had gained such news, if true, as would at once,
By their own act, throw down our enemies;
Wrest from their hands the sword invincible
Of heavenly justice, hurling on their heads
A load of such accumulated guilt,
As would disable them, beyond repair,
Even had they each a Titan's fearlessness!
Then, mentioning, from some expressions dropped
By Nicholas Hubert, Bothwell's confidant,[30]
A worthless prating shrimp, that he had learned
As much, when altogether joined, as led
To this, that Hepborne was to perpetrate,
With his accomplices, a deed, this night,
That would awake us all, though sunk beneath
The leaden chains of senseless lethargy!
By no slight inference, he shrewdly drew
From vague reports he formerly had heard,
That 'twas assuredly designed to fall
On Darnly; founded on the Earl's bold views
Of gaining full possession of the Queen;
With her consent contrived, as he supposed.
Though, on my saying Hubert ne'er so great
An oaff could be, as, *seriously*, to talk

---

[29] Melv. p. 125. [30] Rob. v. ii. Diss. on K. Henry's murder.

In such a strain; he came to think,
No classic author finding to oppose 't,
It must have been some roguish jest, to mock
The times; the frequency of such alarms,
And cool assassinations;[31] or perhaps
A plot of Mary's self, to make him blaze
A false event, to ruin him at Court.
So, sinking down, to what I meant he should,
A state of quiet uncertainty, he left
Me, passively, to wait the coming night.[32]

Leth. 'T was well contrived; as nothing could be done.

Mur. As when I heard my host had overcome,
The border freebooters, in crowds, I hanged;[33]
As when I found the Pope his pensioner,[34]
A rival in the chancellor's office you, *(to Morton)*
A rival in the secretary's you, *(to Maitland)*[35]
And I a foe had lost by Rixio's death;
Such tidings glad so pleased my patriot ear,
I forthwith formed, and proffered up a prayer,
With gospel apt quotations interspersed,
To get the news confirmed and sanctified.
If true, it doubtless is in consequence
Of the suggestions I prevailed on you,
Presuming on th' effects of David's death,[36]
Which, by advice, you aided Darnly in,[37] *(to Lethington)*
To hazard on rash Bothwell, to induce
Him to assist us with her Grace the Queen,
At the Craigmillar Conference; improved
By his impatient spirit to a strange,
Ambitious, bold, and bloody inference.[38]
To whom, if this conjecture should be right,
Even were it for th' advantage of the State,
Could we apply, if those that could prevent

---

[31] Rob. B. 4, 1566.—Hume, Eliz. c. 11, 1565.
[32] Melv. p. 125.—Crawford's Mem. pref. p. 29.
[33] Buch. L. 17. [34] Melv. pp. 55–57.
[35] Spotsw. L. 4, an. 1564, 1565, pp. 189, 193, 194.—Hume, Eliz. c. 2, 1566.
[36] Spotsw. L. 4, an. 1565, 1566, pp. 195, 196, 197.—Crawford's Mem. pref. p. 37.
[37] Spotsw. L. 4, an. 1565, p. 195.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[38] Melv. p. 76.

And punish, are themselves the criminals:
If, for the faithful convert worshipper,
A faithless idolist is idolized,
For, wanting zeal, what else can trimmer be?[39]
When Bothwell's self 's the reigning minister;[40]
Commands her Grace's heart as well as head:
And Darnly soon the secret would disclose;
For our rewards, betray us to the Queen;[41]
And leave us at the mercy of them both,
As he already did, my Lord with you. *(to Mortoune)*
Then why need I, unduteous here remain,
Unheeded, and shut out; impelled, and summoned home.
Another urgent call I have to go;
Though its concern is all my own. The King's
Dislike to *me* is marked and personal;[42]
And I suspect, from the anxiety,
She could not hide, her Grace the Queen expressed
Just now, that I should not set out *to-night*,
Besides confirming my alarms, that th' Earl,
Through her, has a design, from thence, to draw
Some argument against myself, if here.
Leth. But, what would it avail, should it be true?[43]
Myr. It is or false, or marriage must ensue.
He is or mad, or certain of the Queen.
If she shall *marry* him, the cause is our's.
'T will, by a shocking match, disgust her friends;
Make them ashamed of her; revolts produce;
And leave her soon an easy prey to deep
Elizabeth; to fall into her fangs
Of iron, from her toils invisible,
Like me, when Darnly's marriage I opposed
For her. Though banished hence on that account,
I suffered insults but, for services;
Till Darnly's self, again, on Rizew's death,
Through you, recalled me from the doubtful state
She kept me in, then you betrayed, and drove [long,
Into my place *(to Mortoune)*. Before, perhaps, 't is
As she expected ere the nuptial tie,

---

[39] Hume, c. 2, 1565. [40] Melv. p. 77. [41] Melv. p. 78.
[42] Rob. B. 3, 1565. Dissert. on K. Henry's Murder.
[43] Tytl. p. 253.

"*One country will receive both of the Queens.*"[44]
This would, of course, relieve us of our *own*,
With her confessing train idolatrous
Of bishops, priests, and monks, and foreigners,
To fetter us to France and despotism;
Upheld, fit tools! another bloody Beaton,
With all his persecutions, to revive.
Mort. We understand.
Mur. Though, still, were our success
More sure, could proof be previously obtained,
Would fix, at our command, her Grace's guilt,
By an attempt, as at the Conference,
Again with this design, to use the Earl.—
Keep clear, my brethren, then, of all direct
Concern this night, whatever may arise,
Though good for The Religion, and the State,
For civil and religious liberty,
Though for our congregation's benefit,
Unless against the after consequence
Somehow secured. But, if the deed is done;
If, as Buchanan's tale seemed to foretell,
"This night, before the morning's sun returns
"Shall the Lord Darnly lose his life;"[45]
Should I be still away, then, it were wise
Not to attempt, with undiscerning zeal,
In vain the Earl's *acquittal* to oppose,
Nor mar the *marriage* that may thence ensue.
This, of itself, would good from evil bring:
'T would finish their career.[46] We 're all in terms
With him. Though once he sought my life, and fled,
I 'm even his friend:[47] and as for you, my Lord *(to Mortoune)*
You know, 't was he your pardon that obtained,
At James's baptism, for her David's death,

---

[44] Rob. v. 1. p. 225.—Tytler, p. 215. [45] Leslie.
[46] Whitak. v. 3. p. 282.—Cand. 94 of the transl.—Blackw. and Jebb. 41. 216.—Annot. ad Buch. L. 18. D. 3. Libello, &c. According to these last authors, previous to Murray's journey to France, about two months after the murder of Darnly, he commended his whole estate in trust to the Queen and Bothwell; and, before that, signed the bond recommending Bothwell to the Queen.
[47] Melv. p. 77.—Rob. B. 3. 1562. B. 3. 1565.

At the Craigmillar Conference refused.[48]
Your cousin Douglas is in confidence;
Our Glasgow's parson Archibald I mean;
As yours *(to Lethington)* Lord Seaton is, as well 's yourselves.
You 've but possessed, now that he guides her Grace,
His favour yet to use, while 't is of use;
To spur your powers in time, that after proof,
If *art and part* she is, as I suspect,
May not be wanting, to involve the Queen,
And show her guilt to our advantage, clear:
'T were better *now*, than, by construction, hence.—
Leth. The while, 'tis "yours, to look your fingers
Behold the doings" safe, "and nothing say;"[49] [through;
As, at Craigmillar met, I late proposed.
Would that her Grace were equally secure,
Without defeating other interests![50] *(Aside.)*
Mur. Adieu!
Mort. The angry face of heaven relax;
Convulsed, the flying surges sink to sleep,
Till your strong castle's shelter sure you 've gained.
(Exit Murray.
Leth. The Queen has some despatches yet to sign.
Mort. That we may take our measures as 'tis best,
I 'll wait, in my apartments, your return.
Leth. When free, I shall attend your Lordship there.
(Exeunt at opposite doors.

---

[48] Melv. p. 77. Tytler, p. 234.
[49] Protestation by Huntly and Argyl.—
[50] Melv. p. 79.

ACT II.

The Earl of Murray gone, with deep intent
To "look his fingers through," and wait the event,
The Earl of Mortoune, and sly Maitland left,
Of their great counsellor meanwhile bereft,
Consult how by their rudder best to steer,
So, as advised, to keep from perils clear;
Inflame the fire, the Earl of Bothwell ruin,
And Queen involve in all the mischief brewing.
Although a patriot eloquent and keen,
To liberty in church and state his lean,
Learned Lethington inclines to save her Grace,
Should aught occur on her to bring disgrace,
Through envy, slander, weakness, or deceit;
But th' Earl to spur, and leave him to his fate.

Scene; An Apartment in Mortoune's Lodgings in Hallyruidhouse.

MORTOUNE.

I'd rather rule than serve; have wealth than want.
'Tis better to be hated, than despised,
For self regard, than self indifference;
By interested avarice to gain,
Get power by policy, by selfishness,
Than lose by self neglect, and draw contempt.
From consciousness, from what we feel ourselves
As to our weight and value, we are weighed,
Or rise or fall; as we direct the beam,
It seems to move; the scales ascend or sink.
By contradiction strange, one suffers shame,
Or blame, in both, forsooth; go as we will,
Omit, commit, or shame, or blame ensues.
If we're condemned for self neglect, as well
As self respect, then, selfishness be mine;
Dominion, wealth, with envy to contend.
'Tis to the poor, 'tis to the destitute
Of riches, and of power, with poverty of purse,
That poverty of spirit appertains:

I'll not deprive the beggar of his right;
Let shame be his, let pity comfort him.—
The train now laid, our leader Murray 's gone;
Marry, methinks 'tis plain it must be so;
" To look his fingers through, say nought," and thus
The fatal issue safely to abide,
As by the Secretary 'twas advised
It seems, at the Craigmillar Conference,
Contrived to sound the Queen, and flatter her;
Encourage Bothwell; and myself restore;
Though unsuccessfully as to the last.
Yes, by my troth, 'twas counselled well, for *him*!
'Tis like his art, th' ungenerous effects
Of which, so late recovered, I observed.
The same the man, when he and Lethington
Deserted me, at first, on Rixio's death,
Before the recent Conference was held.[1]—
Deserted, after I had boldly joined that plot,
Of Lethington's, to aid the King,
In Lennox's advice for David's fall;[2]
Stop parliament, prevent the forfeitures,
The revocation of our grants, and seize
The mastery at Court; by finishing
The chantings of the chancellor, to be,[3]
His foe, the Pope's, and Villamonte's tool;[4]
That, as contracted, he might then return.[5]
To aid the King, to aid our instrument,
By Douglas duped, my relative, to head,
Contract, and lend his poniard to the plot.[6]—
As well as Darnly, basely both, at first,
Though 'twere, just now, to publish this unwise;
Or be a party in its sequel here,
When things are, independent of our help,
Themselves fast ripening, to our choicest wish,
Ambition and revenge to gratify.—
His counsels were; " *Keep clear of all direct*
" *Concern to-night, unless somehow secured:*—

---

[1] Rob. B. 4. 1566. [2] Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1565, p. 194.
[3] Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1565, p. 194.
[4] Melv. pp. 63, 64. Hume, Eliz. c. 2. 1566.
[5] Melv. p. 63.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[6] George Douglas, pp. 64, 66. Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1565 p. 194.

" *By previous proof of guilt involve her Grace.*"
But, how involve the Queen by previous proof
Decisive of her share, for future use;
Or be, ourselves, so well secured, and safe;
As by obtaining her authority,
If possible, to put her guilt beyond
The power of doubt.—Then, " *let him be acquit,*"—
For, " *if she marries him, the cause is ours.*"—
In one advice he shows himself sincere,
By following it. When done; if our address
Can bring about a hasty match, we 'll, thus,
Increase its horrors; and, with greater speed,
The fruits enjoy.——But *this* is after-game.—
Our object, now, is to " *involve the Queen.*"—

LETHINGTON.

'T is Lethington.—How fares it with her Grace?
Leth. Though sometimes sad when left in solitude,[7]
I never saw her gaiety so much
Abated. She is more depressed—less dull
She was at her retreat, since Rixio's death,
Craigmillar Castle;[8] ere, to Stirling, thence,
She went to celebrate so pompously
The Prince's baptism. So disordered, scarce
She could make out her royal signature.
Mort. And yet the Masque so near! Did she assign
No cause for this; why thus so much disturbed?
Leth. She did; referring it to want of health;
Complaining of her side, in which, you know,
She 's oft afflicted with a transient pain.[9]
Though, I suspect, 't is rather pain of mind,
If I could dive into appearances;
And that she has some pre-conceptions, deep,
Her lover plots against her husband's life.
Mort. If so, the Masque will be a mask indeed!
Marry, 't will be a mask within a mask!
Yes, by my faith it will! as I 've a beard;

---

[7] Melv. p. 54.—Rob. p. 31, l. 3. B. 4. 1566.
[8] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[9] Rob. Dissert. on K. Henry's murder.

And, by the english standards made,[10] a sword
And ruff; 't will be a mask within a mask!
Leth. If my construction's right, with that design
It must have been prepared; and will at once
Point out the scheme we should adopt, in strict
Pursuance of Lord James's cautious plan.
If by the Earl's advice fix'd on this night;
Fix'd, as a bold diversion to amuse;
To keep her Grace away from Kirk-a-Field;
To turn attention to another point;
And to remove suspicion from them both;
It will continue till the deed is done.
We 're each engaged, and can, with ease, remain
With them, behind this mask, though with a view
To show ourselves, that all we 're *there* may know
While it is doing.
Mort. You 've considered well
And, that we may each other recognise,
Though I should not alone be undersized,
I 'll have my favour fashioned like a *rose*,
In compliment to *love*.
Leth. And *England* too.[11]
If I mistake not, it is meant to serve them both.
Mort. Together, or disjoined, my friend,
As you incline to view't; as suiting best
Th' occasion, or our party in the State.
Leth. Then with the bearded *thistle* mine be bound;
To love and England joined, as by the sea,
With liberty, intelligence, and law,
As nature instigates: instead of France,
With servile ignorance, and pageantry,
To reconcile 't to fetters, priests, and kings,
By all the deeply studied tricks of art,
The eye and ear to dazzle with delight,
To blind the judgment and to banish thought,
And worship from the Deity to draw,
To idols, saints, and popes, and pompous rites,
And servile ceremonies insincere,
Enjoined, or pride, or avarice to feed;

---

[10] Hume. Eliz. c. 7.
[11] Melv. pp. 110. 113 115. 116. 118. 123.

So much unlike the knowing, sensible,
Devout sobriety, and unconstraint,
Sincere, respectful, decency of port,
Unostentatious, unaffected course,
Of Scotland's meetings congregational;
So simple, humble, pure, and primitive.
Though tending toward freedom and reform,
'T will charm the Queen upon her favourite wish,
A happy UNION in her darling hope,
Her infant son, and show my zeal to please
Them all. Meanwhile, if Bothwell press again
Your joining him, as like he may,[12] "*involve*
"*Her Majesty*," you 've heard; but "*guard yourself*."
Yet, grant it mercy, she may stand it out![13]
'T is not her person, but her policy
I am unfriendly to, in church and state,
Submission to the See of Rome, and France,
To, or intolerance or tyranny.
O liberty of body, and of mind!
The glory of proud Scotland, and her chiefs;
O'er hill and dale, to every Scot so dear!
Thou spring to industry, and enterprize,
To art, to science, and to search for truth;
With our first breaths, with all our faculties
Thy servants and protectors, graciously,
To heighten every bliss on earth bestowed;
Restrained by prudence but, or justice' self,
Although responsible for the abuse,
What compensations, what enjoyments else,
For thy degrading absence can atone!
Did not wise Cato fly to Utica
For thee; there fall upon his sword, and die
A Roman death, a willing sacrifice!
Did not brave Antony to Egypt fly
For thee; there fall upon his sword, and die
A Roman death, before he 'd part with thee:
Nay Cleopatra leave, with all her charms,
For whom he had but lately lost a world!
For thee, did not the Saints, that suffered, die!
For thee, did not their deaths our Martyrs meet;
And follow thee to happiness in heaven! *(Aside)*

---

[12] Melv. p. 77. [13] Melv. p. 79.

Mort. You seem in absence, wandering abroad,
Contemplative, astray from self and friend.
Leth. The dangers of the Queen reflections force
Unwelcome.—Who 's her secretary?—*me!*
Mort. Psha!—am not I her Chancellor! her first;
Her most indebted servant; both for rank,
And pardon just received! But, when, you know,
The good of the religion and the state
Require—
Leth. Ingratitude! us to be false!
Deceitful, faithless, treacherous! Traitors! b
Ungallant traitors! Traitors in disguise,
In favour, office, trust, and confidence!—
Does *the religion* charitable teach
To pay, or good for ill, or ill for good?
To harbour, or forgiveness, or revenge?
Give Cæsar honours due, or take his life?
Mort. Our patriotism will balance every thing;
It Brutus freed, who doomed to death his *sons;*
And saw them both beheaded on the spot:
It Brutus freed for murdering his *friend;*
Although unfreed his country still remained,
And scorned his effort to retard her course:
'T will clear our debts, and leave us liberty—
Leth. To seize her widowed self—her power—her son—
For our rewards, her treasures left to hoard,
And hide, behind the guards of patriotism,
And liberty, a Regent to surround.
Yes; all from patriotism! pure patriotism!
Sincere, unmixed, unselfish patriotism!
The independence of our sovereigns,
Our regent's, own, and people's, rights resign
To England, all give up as Baliol did;
To England sell, to her Elizabeth,
Our princes, and ourselves, from patriotism!
This patriotism was once a trusty cloak,
For comfort and for use, in Greece and Rome;
In Britain too: but now, 't is old, thread-bare,
And thin, and shelterless, from tear and wear;
By envy, spleen, revenge, and avarice,
So riddled full of holes the light gets in;
The weakest eye with ease can through it see;
'T is not for storms like this; it will not do.

The rose I with the thistle mean to join
On *equal terms*, her Grace's views to please,
Her present claims as well as future hopes,
But, not at the expence of liberty;
Of native, freeborn, Scottish liberty;
Of Scotland's independence, and her Queen's.
Mort. Now justice you have done to loyalty,
Your secret sympathies, and liberty;
Then, to return—should Bothwell chance to come?
Leth. 'T will be enough to back his aims, and send
Him to her Grace. This the Lord James advised,
And we agreed.

SERVANT.

Perhaps 't is *he*.
Serv. My Lord,
The Earl of Bothwell. If you 're disengaged.
Mort. I wait his Lordship's company. [*exit Servant.*
Leth. I 'll watch;
And follow up th' impressions you have made
Most zealously—at least as to *himself*;[14]
But may her Grace with fortitude resist!—(*Aside*).
Then, at the masque, we meet again, at twelve.
[*exit Lethington.*
Mort. I 'm glad to find he has come round at last.
Although with Murray and myself he steers,
His liking to the Queen[15] distracts him thus,
And makes him oft seem otherwise disposed.
I wish it hence may not disturb us both:
Her Grace's and his country's liberty;
His jealousy of English influence,
Contracted with the Dowager of Guise,
Her secretary first, not yet thrown off;
And pride of independence acted on;
Defection and hostilities produce.
I wish, however likely it may seem,
These passions hence, unruly prisoners,
May not, when now so difficult to curb,
Break out in refractory civil wars

[14] Melv. pp. 79, 80.—Spotsw. L. 5. An. 1568, p. 215.
[15] Spotsw. L. 5. An. 1568, p. 215.—Rob. B. 3. 1565.

Rebellious; if subdued, his haughtiness,
Despair and spleen, from want of other foes
On which to wreak themselves, may n't from their tales
And characters in story so admired,
A Cato, or an Antony revive,
And make him turn his sword upon himself,
Like those mad heroes of antiquity;
While free, to shun captivity and shame,
To be translated pure and scholar-like,
Poetical, in classic style, to Styx's bank;
And die a Roman death, for liberty!——

BOTHWELL.

A hearty welcome to my noble friend.
Both. Thanks to the able Chancellor. 'T was well
I met with Lethington, on my return
From hence; so much solicitude he showed
To know if I should be at home. Since noon,
When with the Queen in presence I observed
Some circumstances made me doubt, for leave,
The story Murray told of family distress.
Alarmed at such a thought; and, at a time
So critical, I could not rest, be quiet,
Until I 'd learnt if 't was the real cause
Of his abrupt departure hence, amidst
The shoals, and rocks, and islands of our Firth,
With frightful warning breakers round Inchkeith,
On such a day. The billows 'bout the Bass,
In rising spray, would almost reach the eye,
Ascending white, before they fall in showers
Upon its flat and prison-covered top,
If we had light.
Mort. I can affirm so far;
His tale agrees with the reports I heard.
On questioning his servant, whom I caught
Just on the eve of his departure hence,
I got the same account with that you give;
For, from the mere concealment of the plot,
~~I wish it, hence, may not disturb us both.~~
~~*Both.*~~ I, too, have had inquietudes and fears.[16]

[16] Melv. p. 128.

Yet, after what I heard he sternly said,
And ventured plainly to insinuate,
When at Craigmillar; with the known dislike,
By hate returned, with which he ever viewed
The King; I think, at all events, 't were vain
To fear a bar in him, to save a foe,
So long his obstacle to power, though taught
The knowledge of the whole conspiracy.

Both. No doubt, 't was he, with learned Lethington,
So restless, plotting, subtile, eloquent,[17]
Her secret secretary, and her friend,
With both Ulysses' powers and Cicero's,
Determined me at that same conference;[18]
The only fruit the conference produced;
For they could not accomplish a divorce,
Nor could they gain a pardon for yourself:
For *me* alone she David's death forgave;
I brought you back,[19] and made you chancellor
Again, when he and Maitland both had failed.[20]

Mort. You did.[21]

Both. Yes, to gain o'er your head and hand.[22]
Then, why, my Lord, do you still keep aloof?
Join him, in following Lethington's advice,
"To look your fingers through, and nothing say?"
Even if he were most friendly to the King,
Is it not strange that such a selfish man,
As void of influence, as of future hopes
From the high source of honour's fountain here,
Should still retain, mislead, so many friends,
And such, from rank and wisdom too, as ought
T' assist her Majesty, and rule the State.

Mort. Of some you mention, this I shall declare,
Their highest pride would be to aid her Grace
In all her councils, if they knew the means
By which to share her royal influence.

Both. In me, to teach the Chancellor the means
To gain a royal ear, were as absurd

---

[17] Rob. B. 3. 1559.
[18] Melv. pp. 76. 77.
[19] Melv. pp. 76. 77.
[20] Melv. pp. 76. 77.—Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[21] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[22] Melv. pp. 76. 77.

As slaughtered Ricci to have tried to help
T' improve a Scottish air, to please the Queen.
Mort. And yet, to be your pupil 't is my wish.
Both. Then follow out, with me, Lord James's hints.
Anticipate the royal thoughts. Relieve
The Church and State from farther troubles. Make
Us quit of him, at once, without delay.
Mort. But, if her Grace resisted, at the conference,
Even the glozed eloquence of Lethington,
To throw off Darnly by divorce, in peace,
From contract made within degrees forbid;
Is 't possible she should approve a mode
So dangerous as this!
Both. 'T is more, I know,
Than possible; and notwithstanding all
Her fears of spots upon her honour, fame,
Or conscience,[23] nothing but her dread, I doubt,
Of throwing imputation on her son's
Legitimacy 'gainst his future claims,
Made her refuse. For such her caused dislike,
And indignation at indignities,
I think myself, that, were it not for *him*,
A month should scarce elapse before she 'd wed,
And be entirely mine.
Mort. Were stops removed,
You 'd baffle disappointment by despatch,
My Lord, in marrying her immediately,
Directly, then.
Both. I shall, you may be sure,
If I can see into a woman's breast;
For, ere another third of her full course
Around our glorious light, so now obscured,
The earth shall finish, I 'll make known to all
My elevation, I am confident;
And freely gained: I 've so insured the aid
Of those who can remove th' impediment;
Can loose the nuptial knot by which I 'm tied.[24] [cool.
Mort. The Queen's attachment, else, perhaps might

---

[23] Protest by Huntly and Argyll.—Tytl. p. 234.
[24] Rob. B. 4. 1566. B. 4. 1567.—Hume's Hist. of Engl. Eliz. C. 2. 1567.—Tytl. p. 253. Note.

Both. I hope you, then, no longer entertain
A doubt of my success; of the rewards
I soon shall have it in my power to heap
Upon the prudent followers of my fates,
By grants and plunder, fines and forfeitures.[25]
Mort. So much impressed am I, my Lord; so struck
With each advantage from the enterprise,
That; in addition to the promises
I made, on my return, at Whittingham,
When there intrusted with the deed itself;[26]
You may depend with utmost certainty,
I 'll *afterwards* support you, in your bold
Attempt upon the person of the Queen;[27]
In silence your *acquittal* hear; and sign
With other friends, if then required, a *bond*
Approving of the *marriage* you propose;
Nay, when acquitted, get, if possible,
Your innocence by *parliament* confirmed,
As clear, by parliament *itself* confirmed,
If with celerity you move. We 'll show
Of what a parliament is capable:
For, marry, what is parliament, methinks;
Of what, God's mercy, think you it consists,
But mortal men, collected, and convened,
With appetites and passions, sensible,
Accessible, assailable, exposed,
As suitable to each, to threat, and bribe,
And courtesy, till won, like woman won.
Against both power and policy combined,
Nor man, nor woman is invincible.
Yet won with speed, if here to won you wish.
But ductile while 't is hot, to give effect,
Then strike the iron ere it cools.
Both. On that
You may rely. Though, if you will but act;
The slightest share in the performance take,
T' increase my strength and confidence the more;
So soon the summit as I shall have gained,

---

[25] Melv. pp. 113. 119. 120.
[26] Rob. Append. Arch. Douglas's Letter to the Queen of Scots.
[27] Tytl. p. 258, *et seq.*

The whole beneath shall be at your command;
Like amorous Jove when Danae he woo'd,
In showers of gold sweet beauty's gift to bribe;[28]
The treasures left of the devoted church,
With power, and wealth, to riot on at will:
Enough to make you rich as Croesus' self.[29]
Mort. If you 'll obtain a *Warrant from the Queen,*[30]
To give my aid security and weight,
The good of the Religion, and the State,
Require I should consent. So far you 've gained
Upon my reason, and my gratitude;
Without the spurs of powerful interest
To urge, or wealth, or beauty, to allure.
Both. If now you saw the deadly Warrant signed
By her own hand, you could not be more safe
From feared resentment, than you are, from all
The circumstances you are master of:
Then why her feelings shock by asking more?
Mort. One slaughter I have lately headed, led
By Darnly's self; who then abandoned me;
Although I guarded him while doing it,
And sent my cousin George, to join, and act,
With his own weapon, in the enterprize.[31]
'T were trampling sadly on her mercy, scarce
Two months, through you obtained, again to join,
When husband to her Grace, even though against
The man who dealt so basely. Till 't is got,
I therefore beg you will content yourself
With *after* aid, if *soon* required; my sole
Concern. I cannot be engaged, unless
By such direct permission from the *Queen.*
'T is much from one by royalty deceived.— *(Aside.—*
Both. Curse on his resting it on *that!* I 've failed!
If so *resolved*, I 'll try what can be done.
Mort. If you can gain her *Grace*; her, *forthwith, gain,*
Out-running obstacles; then all, of course,
Will follow, to your utmost wish.

---

[28] Melv. p. 118.
[29] Melv. p. 124.—Crawf. pp. 198, 219, 248, 273.—Rob. B. 3. 1561. B. 5. 1569. B. 6. 1574.—Tytl. pp. 318, 321.
[30] Rob. B. 6. 1581. [31] Melv. p. 64.

PARIS.

Paris. *(to Bothwell)* My Lord,
The Earl of Huntly sent me to enquire
The hour at which you mean to be at home?
Both. Inform the Earl, he 'll find me there, alone,
Some two hours hence, to have his company.
Mort. For this diversion thanks! My turn is served.
No more I wish to say. 'Tis opportune,
Methinks. Yes; marry, by my troth it is.
I must improve upon 't, to keep him off. *(Aside.*
Both. But, should——*(to Paris.)* Away!
Mort. With your and Huntly's leave,
I 'll not detain him long. Has Huntly yet
Forgot his earldom's loss that Murray holds?
Both. No. Still he bans the treachery of his false,
Fat, fickle father for 't. To Corrichie
He oft recurs with Sutherland, and fights
The battle o'er again.[32]
Mort. Come, Paris, first,
If aught you 've gathered since I saw you last,
Deliver it. You 've always something new.
In such unruly times, a man can scarce
Stir out, to cross the street, without some shape
Of strange intelligence, to hinder him.
You 've heard, no doubt, of Murray's going hence,
On public leave, across the Frith to-day.
Paris. I have, my Lord, and all the world beside,
I am convinced; so great an interest
They take in each his intimate concerns.
Both. But whence the ground of such a strong belief;
That we may judge if your conclusion's right.
Paris. *(with an arch significant look, to Bothwell.)*
As now I hastened down the paved descent;
Continued ridge of street, between its slopes,
So storied high, with people cabined, crammed;
That from the imperial Castle hither ends,
Contending with the hurricane, I scarce;
With Knox's, on the north, left to the left;

---

[32] Rob. Oct. 28. 1562.

Had passed the Nether-bow, and satisfied
The watchful centinel that stood, with long
Lochaber axe and broad claymore, to guard
The port, close muffled up, when, as I crossed,
Above the Earl's house, upon the south,
With large balconies rich, and windows carved,
And at its entrance spear-like pyramids,
'Bout half-way down from the Reformer's, arched,
A covered entry, I o'erheard the name
Of Murray, uttered in a way that seemed
Unusual; in a tone of strange, and half
Suppressed ejaculation. Wondering much;
Inquisitive to know what, as to him,
Could be the cause, and who, the dickens, thence
Could send it forth, I made a sudden feint,
And softly stealing, by a neighbouring lane,
Up to the farther end of the retired
Sly thoroughfare, I, unperceived, observed,
By the pale glimmer of a famished lamp,
Two canting zealots, Knox's elders both,
And foes as fell to friar "hypocritis,"
Morose, with aspects lengthened out and sour,
Of those that held the baptism of the Prince
Idolatry inexpiable,[33] snug,
With each his worsted plaid of sober gray,
With checks of black, and bonnet broad, and brown,
And tappinless, and grave, about mid course,
The centre of the passage.

Mort. And why not?
Although they were; can elders not converse
In secrecy, like other citizens?
Because a man in his kirk-sessions sits
In judgment with his minister,
And punishes and publishes the guilt
Of fornicators, quenching fires, aloft,
Upon a creepy or repenting-stool,
Held up to cautioned congregation round,
Is he, forsooth, to face each ridge and blast,
Himself, that may abate his proper heat?
Invited by the shelter, those that lead

---

[33] Rob. B. 4. 1568.—Hume, Eliz. C. 1. 1561.

Reform; or Knox himself, might have been driven
By chance, without reflection, to the place,
As well as they, by such an afternoon.
Yes, sirrah, by my troth, you know they might!
Then, what of that, on which so much to rest?
Both. They surely might, without the slightest stain:
But, in the means your orders to obey,
His want of courtly breeding, it is hoped,
You 'll overlook; and place to ignorance,
Increased by our indulgences of late.
He has not long been entered with the Queen.
Paris. If both your Lordships will allow me time;
And hear my story to its end, before
You draw an inference?—They stood, about
The middle of the passage, side by side,
With each his plaid; but so connected, lapt,
The one above, the other underneath,
They made but one circumference; a broad,
Two-headed monster of them both; two faced,
With open gates, a Janus, yet averse
To war, even with the elements.
Mort. Black-friars;
Two sly uncloistered, skulking monks, methinks;
Dominicans, that go about and preach.
The Jacobins of France, he knows they 've been,
Lamenting the apostacy and loss
Of their late prior, of Saint Andrews, filled
With Augustins, and convents Black and Gray,
Thence colonising till dispersed, as here,
Their fates deploring, and conspiring how
To make it up, their fortunes to retrieve,
When half-way met, between their convent's site,
And the old monastery of Halyrud
Saint Andrews first supplied with Augustins;
Two skulking monks, of those that plot and preach
In privacy, by him to elders changed.[34]
Paris. If so, my Lord, they must have been disguised.

---

[34] "Alexander II. had a particular kindness for the mendicant friars "of the order of St Dominic, called with us the *black friars*. For "them he founded no fewer than eight monasteries, at Edinburgh, "Berwick, Air, Perth, Aberdeen, Elgin, Stirling, and Inverness." —Sir D. Dalr. Ann. A. D. 1249. Alexander II.

They first, themselves, had changed, their weeds at least;
Their cloaks and cowls they had *reformed.*
Both. But what
Of Murray? for with him you first set out.
Paris. In closest intimacy they appeared,
And each with each seemed only taken up,
Inflaming, as I judged, each other's brain,
From some seditious sermon they had heard;
Against proud "priestis," and fornicating freers,
And images, the hate of mad Glencairn;[35]
Till, underneath, between them both, I thought
I spied the circling, undulating edge
Of a bright petticoat, suspended o'er
Two neatly turned ancles: Satan's signs
Abominable; by St Giles himself!
Though Edinburgh's guardian Saint, excuse the oath;
Enough to bring God's vengeance on the sex,
This city, and the nation.[36] All, except
The rim, was close enveloped by the plaids
United round the whole conventicle,
As "hypocritis and monsters, the Gray Freers,"[37]
To the first blast of Knox's trumpet deaf.[38]
Even Arran's self could not have hugged his dear
Alison Craig with greater fervency,[39]
When for a holy conversation met,
Than each of them this little favourite!
(Mortoune seems displeased.)
Both. 'Tis well observed. But hasten to the point.
Paris. At every squall, one raised his head, and
Toward the opening to the street; and groaned! [looked
With nasal voice, imploring the *guid Earl*
Might be so strengthed, as to overcome
His earthly trials! Then the other sighed!
And prayed he might be taught to steer his course
In safety through the troubled sea of life;
With all its rocks, and shoals, and tempests!—Then
A shrill and smothered accent from between,
As if from fear, with broken utterance,

---

[35] Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1567, p. 208.
[36] Knox, p. 330.—Hume, Eliz. C. 1, 1561.
[37] Knox's History of the Reformation.
[38] Hume, Eliz. C. 1, 1561. [39] Hume, Eliz. C. 1, 1561.

Deplored his Lady's situation, full
Of female sympathy, that had, from hence,
Obliged the Earl t' attempt, on such a day,
To cross the frith, although my countrymen
Had left Inchkeith; extolling high his love,
And tenderness, and conjugal regard.
Even when so much engrossed with their Susanna;
The courted sister with the raging storm,
Called unrelenting, pitiless, and fell,
As to neglect their helpless King, still, none
Forgot the perils of the *godly Earl!*
So great his studied popularity!
Both. Confound his art! 'Tis irresistible!
I dread it more than even Elizabeth's! *(Aside.)*
Mort. (to Bothwell.) This story seems concerted: to
To ridicule; the Church Reformed—and me.[40] [insult;
Yet, the religion you profess to join.
But, marry, to profess, is not to join,
Methinks, though mere professions some will please.
In England, the Lord Darnly's self-professed,
Through policy, to be a protestant;
And here attended Knox in our St Giles,[41]
Both. If 'twas concerted, it was with his *priest.*
Mort. Then give him that; t' absolve thee from the
(Gives Paris a blow, that drives him to a side.) [lie!
With ear-rings, marry! Love-lock too, forsooth!
Both, by my troth, much honoured by the head
To which they 're hung, so suitably, i' faith!
With ear-rings, love-lock, badge of favour next!
A foreigner; is Ricci risen again?
Will all the stabs he got? a Cæsar's death;
A death too good for him; not hold him down?
Not banish, with his life, his impudence;
The memory of his dress, and insolence?
Paris. I only did, my Lord, what you required.
Both. Away! No more! I told you what to say
On your return. The Earl of Huntly waits. *(Exit Paris.*
The victim gone;—I looked for more respect,

---

[40] Crawf. pp. 198. 219. 248.
[41] Melv. pp. 56. 57.—Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1564. p. 191.—Hume, Eliz. C. 2. 1565.

If not to me, at least to Royalty;
Than, thus, to strike; and strike, without a fault,
The servant to us both. Had you applied,
Her Grace had given redress; had you been wronged.
Mort. The injury, I doubt, had seemed but small;
When such, as she delights to do herself.
Herself, forsooth! and to encourage too!
But, if so high you, thus, espouse his cause!
I 'll The Religion; and myself defend.
(*Drawing his sword.*)
Both. Beshrew thee, then, if it must come to *this*;
If *such* is the apology you make!
If 't is to beard, brow-beat, and bully, well,
Regardless of your size and impotence,
With all your oracles,[42] your english sword,
And ruff reduced to please Elizabeth,[43]
Your real queen, and of her power you prize. [gauge
Mort. "Your size! your impotence!" Though under
In person, length of sword, and breadth of ruff,
And under passion too, I 'll you o'ermatch,
O'er you I 'll over-crow, if I mistake
Not, ere 'tis long, or over-rate myself.
Both. Then suffer for your arrogance and pride;
For the religion, if you will, behind
Hypocrisy your avarice to hide,
You with yourself would implicate in vain:
"For the religion;" yes, for its abuse!
'T will not protect you, nor your aid requires.
Alone defend yourself, or, by your fall,
Unguarded, leave your hoards; your *Lion's Den*;[44]
And let your life repair the Queen's affront!
(*After a few thrusts.*)

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, *rushing in and separating them.*

Doug. May Heaven appease you both! The Chan-
The Earl of Bothwell! [cellor!—

---

[42] Melv. p. 118.
[43] Hume.—Eliz. C. 7.
[44] Rob. B. 6, 1578.

Mort. Cousin, thanks.[45]
Both. And mine.
You did not think to find us so engaged.
But 't is a parson's calling strife to quell.
Mort. Yes, marry, your vocation 't is methinks.
Doug. Then, let, my Lords, this be my office now.
Let feuds be quashed, when prudence calls for peace.
Both. As you observe, this is no time to fight.
Our reasons should rebate our rapiers' points.
With *this*, let rage retire, and hide his face;
(Sheathing his sword.)
The friendly scabbard, for the sword, appear.
Mort. Then let affronts with mine be buried deep—
Although, like ghosts unquiet, to rise again— *(aside.)*
Both. In Lethe's stream. With this embrace, we 'll
Our friendship, now restored. *(They embrace).* [seal
Mort. It grieves to feel,
That though this agent was, in sooth, detained,
And the first kindling furnished by myself,
I caught my flame from such a worthless spark.
Both. Then, to return. As Douglas is your friend,
Your cousin,[46] and concerned, my Lord, he may,
Perhaps, be more successful, lest I fail,
In gaining what you want.
Mort. Why dread the worst?
Besides, you 've Douglas here, my place to fill:[47]
His hands are free, not firmly bound, like mine:
With Huntly, Seaton Maitland's cousin, too,
I judge; if not, with others faithfully.
Both. If Seaton joined, then Lethington, of course,
Would have his deputy, as well as you;
The bond, by blood, in both would be the same.
Mort. To act, you have at least *one* Douglas sure.
Doug. How is it with the King? Is he, my Lord,
Still gaining strength, since his removal here?
Both. He mends apace. Yet, is your noble friend
Inclined to wait with patience for his health:
Though he is conscious; in the self same breath
Admits, that his recovery were against

---

[45] Arnot's Criminal Trials. Archibald Douglas. [46] Ibid.
[47] Melv. p. 100.

The good of the religion, and the state.
When tried, a cousin's influence may have
Effect.—Ere long you shall be satisfied;
As I have, luckily, by note secured,
Some time ago, a private interview. *(to Mortoune.)*
I must away, to meet with Lethington,
Before my brother Huntly shall arrive.
I hope to hear, my friend, *(to Douglas)* of your success.
(Exit Bothwell.

Doug. If I may be allowed; as to the King.
It cannot be, my Lord, that you should wish
To feel afresh th' effects of his caprice;
So lately most ungratefully betrayed
By him, in the affair of Rizzio's death;[48]
Should he his former influence regain.

Mort. For that; already, he has hired, you know,
A vessel to convey him hence. It still,
Awaiting his recovery, I am told,
Lies in the Clyde, to make us quit of him.

Doug. If thus 't were o'er, my Lord, 'twere well: But
Consider the affront, besides the Queen, [then,
On the whole kingdom, by so desperate
A flight; proclaiming our misfortunes wide;
Inviting to disgraceful inference.
'T would instantly be charged to the account
Of inhumanity; and, passing o'er
The provocations, scarce a foreigner
Would see the tall and handsome wanderer;
So winning,[49] slender, straight, smooth, lady-faced;
The youthful banished Sovereign, but, would hoot
At the next Scotsman he should meet abroad,
As a downright barbarian.[50]

Mort Douglas,—Though,
Foreseeing this, the Privy Council tried
Its worst effects to obviate; and sent
Before a full, and friendly narrative
To clear the conduct of the Queen in all
To France;[51] I own the force of your remark:

---

[48] Rob. App. Archibald Douglas's Letter to the Queen of Scots.
[49] Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1563, p. 188. [50] Melv. pp. 48, 56, 82.
[51] Rob. B. 4. 1566.

Besides the strong inducements, with the bribes
Held out, when first you called for my advice;
And charged my ear with the conspiracy.
Had I the power, I'd send to Halifax,
And, with its Maiden's snap, soon doff his flight;
Unless he chose to leave his head behind.[52]
Yes, the religion, every thing invites.
Were I, like you, at perfect liberty,
As hinted then, I should, at once, embrace
The glorious cause of church and state, and free
My country from the troublesome distress
Of this cross-grained administration, were
The young idolator to die the death,
Without another executioner.[53]
It might be, thus, we should get rid of *both*.
'Tis not for children such; a giddy girl,
And long slim, smock-faced, beardless boy, more like
Her sister than her lord;[54] to keep in awe
Proud chiefs, and clans, with mountain fastnesses!
No, by my faith! else Scotland were extinct!
And not a Douglas left, to guard a pass!

Doug. Then, may I hope, my Lord, that for the sake
Of the religion and good government,
You 'll scruples lay aside; and join us still.

Mort. Be satisfied with this, that you yourself;
As was our cousin George, who duped this King,
And with his dagger stabbed our enemy;[55]
Are safe from my resentment. 'Tis enough
You are a Douglas, and a relative,
With one who is the same to Lethington;
If Seaton; you 're concerned. So rest you both;
Without my help, or Maitland's. Ere we meet;
Some short time after Huntly shall have left
The Earl, find Lethington; with him repair
To Bothwell, and procure for me th' event
Of his intended conference with the Queen.
Meantime, when here you always are at home.

(Exit Mortoune.

---

[52] For an account of the Maiden, see Dr Pennicuik's Works with Notes. *Of the Lyne.*

[53] Hume, Eliz. C. 1. 1561.

[54] Melv. pp. 48. 56.

[55] Melv. pp. 64. 65.

Doug. If, from a parson, by assisting, thus,
The rise of Bothwell now; and Morton's wish,
Preceded by revenge, for ravening power,
His avarice to feed;[56] I gain a step
Or two of church preferment, it is well—[57]
What hideous times, when churchmen so can climb!
Yet called reformed; and with religion mad—
Reform—Religion—by assassins led!—[58]
They will go far, in the recovering hence
My present loss of fame and happiness;
With dazzling counterfeits. If they 'll not pass;
If worldly gifts cannot these wants repay,
Then let me drive all painful thoughts away;
For, if I would, I dare not now retract:
'Tis safer to proceed, than venture back.[59]

(Exit.

---

[56] Melv. pp. 113. 118. 120. 123. 124.
[57] Rob. B. 2. B. 3. 1563.—Arnot's Crim. Tr. Arch. Douglas.
[58] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[59] See farther, as to this Archibald Douglas, Melv. p. 174.

ACT III.

The Queen laments, as unprovoked and hard,
The savage murder of her savoyard,
Her David Rizew; and, with pain, repeats
A dream she had, as ominous, which treats
Of all the consequences of that deed
Of brutal jealousy which made him bleed.
By Bothwell Mortoune had been asked to join
In slaying Mary's husband; to combine,
As he had done in Ricci's; but refused,
Unless by her authority excused.
Driven on by Mortoune, Bothwell now, in vain,
A warrant from her Grace tries to obtain.

Scene; The Great Hall, Council-Chamber, or Chamber of Presence in Hallyruidhouse.

(Plaintive Music, while the curtain rises; accompanied by a Voice that continues after the Instruments cease.)

The QUEEN; COUNTESSES *of* ARGYL, HUNTLY, ATHOL, SUTHERLAND; LADY REES; *and Attendants: seated.*

(After a considerable pause.)

Mary. Enough.—The scolding winds make but a harsh
Accompaniment; each bar encountering rude
Thy notes confused.——You may withdraw, and leave
Us to ourselves.—— *(Exeunt Attendants.*
Oh how unlike the sounds
Bewitching Rizew used to charm us with!
C. of Arg. Or which your Grace can likewise issue forth;
So gracefully with spirit and effect,
In action, sense, and dulcet melody,
Might tempt a mermaid syren from the sea,

To learn attractive eloquence, in song,
More sweet by listening to your Majesty.[1]
Mary. They 're music, but, when Rizio's are no more.
Compared with his, they scarce the name deserve.—
Argyl; my sister; did it suit the kind
And tender husband of a Queen to whom
He owed his royalty, to use me so?
To trample on my dignity. To risk
My life; of double value then. With fierce
And brutal insolence to introduce
A band of ruffians, of armed assassins,
To my apartment, at the gloom of night,
To tear from my society; nay force
From my protection, one who, by his powers
In music helped to cheer those hours he chose
To leave me; to indulge in gross pursuits.[2]
C. of Arg. It was a horrid night indeed; to me!
How much more dreadful to your Grace!—Yet, plain
With blood repelled and froze', and breathing stopt,
I think at once, I hear the fiend-like shouts,
And struggles, at the gates into the yard;
The murderous cries from Mortoune, and his men,
When in the court, *a Douglas! a Douglas!*[3]
Ere, on a sudden, open flew the door,
And they themselves, the savages, appeared.
I think I see the secretary's self,
Before so full of merriment and life,[4]
The ear-delighting favourite savoyard,
The envied death-devoted minion still,
With wild and frantic gesture, holding fast
Your Royal person, with uplifted eyes,

---

[1] *Oberon (to Puck.)* "Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-nymph's music."
SHAKSP.—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act ii, Sc. 2.—Pope and Warburton's Ed. with their Notes.

[2] Melv. pp. 66. 67.—Rob. 9th March 1566.—Append. to v. I. No. 15.

[3] Melv. pp. 64. 65.

[4] Melv. p. 54.

Scarce visible beneath the gushing tear,
And screaming for protection piteously,
Justitia! O, Justitia![5] ere the pale,
The frightful sickly Ruthven, underneath
The weight of gleaming armour sinking, plunged
The leading poignard for his timid heart;[6]
Regardless of your Majesty's distress,
And my poor efforts pity to awake.

C. of Hunt. But why from servants look for courtesy?
Why be surprised at so much disrespect?
Is't wonderful they trampled on each right,
If so directed the Lord Darnly's self;
Assisted by the very Chancellor![7]
Tore loose his hands, confined you in his clasp,
From saving him, his courted instrument
To recommend him to your Majesty,[8]
And, at the time, stood, as I've heard, behind
Your Grace's chair, exulting in the deed;
While Douglas, George I mean, the substitute
Of Mortoune, and his relative by blood
And temper, with the King's own dagger, snatched,
Even, with uncourtly freedom, from his side,
Reached, rudely o'er your Grace's shoulder, glanced
The blade, the deadly chilling steel, athwart
Your cheek, and with such fury struck, as fast
To leave the weapon sticking in the wound![9]

C. of Suth. The same has reached my ear; and made
He ne'er for this had left the english court, [me wish
Had not his marriage brought my husband home
From exile to my arms.

C. of Arg. It is most true;
For I, and I alone, was to the whole,
While supping with the Queen, the witness. Thence,
From the adjoining cabinet where we sat,
Through her own bed-room, to this hall they dragged
Him, on the floor of which the spots engrained,
The crying gouts of blood remain; recal
Th' affront each day you sit at work.[10]

---

[5] "David Richio, while murdering, kept crying piteously, *Justitia! "Justitia!*" Hollinshed, A. D. 1566.
[6] Rob. B. 4, 1566. [7] Melv. pp. 64, 65.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[8] Melv. p. 57. [9] Melv. pp. 64, 65.—Whit. v. ii. p. 76.
[10] Whitak. v. iii. p. 219.

L. Reres. Remain!
Yes. There; they do. (*pointing to the floor, at the door to the Queen's bed chamber.*)
There. There they are. And yet
Was he so false, so weak, and treacherous,
As to deny the whole; and lend his name,
By proclamation, 'gainst these very men
He publicly had owned by him were led
To shock, insult, and then confine your Grace. [joined
C. of Hunt. So soon as Bothwell and my husband
Your Majesty and him, when your address
Had gained him over to your side, released
You from imprisonment, hence to Dunbar
You fled, and thus secured their punishment.
Mary. Yes; 't was exactly so. But, thanks to heaven!
In spite of all this cruelty, I have obtained
From it a Son, to raise my drooping soul,
And crush the deep intrigues of vain and false
Elizabeth, to keep from me, and mine,
My english crown. 'T was liker her design
To baffle me in this, than of the man
Whose tenderness I should especially
Have looked for then.[11]
C. of Ath. Perhaps she may, somehow,
Have made a dupe of him to forward it.
The Chancellor, we know, is much her friend,
And leagued with Murray, her vicegerent here.[12]
'T was under his command the men in arms
The palace first surrounded; seized the gates;
And while they slaughtered kept the butchers safe,
By holding watch within the palace square;
My husband leaving at their mercy too,
With Bothwell, and with Huntly who escaped;
The whole; but at the hazard of their lives;
And Sir James Melvil not till night had passed.[13] [death,
C. of Suth. Without some other views than Rizew's
Why was it so conducted? Why despatched
Was he so barbarously, before your Grace;
And at a time so fitly chose, to shock,

---

[11] Melv. p. 66.—Rob. App. to v. 1. No. 15.
[12] Melv. pp. 64. 66.
[13] Melv. p. 64.—Crawf. pref. p. 37.

Alarm, and terrify abruptly: Why,
Rude insolence! did Car and Ballentine,
'T is said, as if, directly, to increase
It to expected certainty, present,
With aggravating threats, a poniard's point,
And pistol to your Grace?[14] And why, next day,
As if through previous concert, did the Earls
Of Murray, Rothes, and the Rebel Lords,
Of their attainder on the very eve,
Without permission venture here?[15] I 'm told
The palace swarmed within with ruffians armed;
Before they 'd dragged him shrieking through the next
Apartment, that his feeble body streamed
With six and fifty wounds! Was all this crowd,
And tumult, only to despatch the weak,
And helpless Rizew?

L. Reres. No. It must have been
The King's design, at least, though duped, perhaps,
To ruin and insult your Majesty;
And suits his slight of you even at the point
Of death: his wayward conduct, later still,
In shunning, on the spot, without excuse,
The baptism of the Prince, all those of rank
Attending, but the *Sire!* he 's so o'er-run
With insolence, caprice, and jealousy.

Mary. Even not misled by rival subtlety,
This last must have misguided him;[16] though each
Advantage she and Murray may have ta'en
Of his unruly passion, thus to fool
Him to the bloody outrage, laid so deep.
Yes, the late prior, her ambitious tool;
Her friend, Argyl; our brother; and my foe.

C. of Arg. But, happily, the scheme did not succeed.

Mary. Most wonderful escape! Such its effects,
As to impress with strange antipathy
My infant, then unborn. A naked sword
Will make him cry, and shudder at the sight![17]
Is 't possible that he could be so blind,

---

[14] Whitak. v. 2. p. 76.
[15] Rob. B. 4. 1566. App. to v. 1. No. 15.
[16] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[17] Sir Kenelm Digby's Essay on Sympathy.

As to suspect me with a man deformed!
So much an antidote to love, as *he!*
Heavens! Had I studied jealousy to crush;
And wished to drive this fiend entirely forth
His bosom; could I e'er have chose a way
So fit, as by adopting *him!* to cheer
My lifeless and deserted lonely hours,
By innocent accomplishments!

C. of Hunt. Your Grace,
'T has Murray; Murray who our title holds
Of Murray, basely gained at Corrichie;
'T is he, has by his bellows', Lethington,
And Mortoune,[18] blown the sparks, to bring him back.

C. of Suth. It must. But, if 't were otherwise; allow
Even that his whims; his wildest thoughts were just;
Still, what can lead him, thus, devoid of sense
And shame, to publish them abroad?

Mary. Heaven knows!
If not, maliciously, to my distress
To add.

C. of Arg. In this, at least, he has, throughout,
Been uniform of late. In Ricci's death,
That, unexpected, brought our brother back;
In his neglect of you at Jedburgh;[19]
On the young James's baptism[20]; and at length,
To wind it to its highest pitch, and blaze
It o'er the Continent, in his intent
To fly the kingdom;[21] he has not left out,
From each affront, a measure could increase 't
By public, aggravating, circumstance.

Mary. Now, that he still continues in a state
Of convalescence, I am almost glad
He was prevented from his wild design
By this disease. Perhaps my anxious care
Of him, since first I took the charge, may yet
Produce a change, and gain upon his proud
Capricious mind, by dint of gratitude.[22] [fear,

L. Reres. So, all of us must pray. Though much, I
'T is rather to be wished than to be found;

---

[18] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[19] Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[20] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[21] Rob. B. 4. 1566–1567.
[22] Rob. B. 4. 1567.

And that your royal tenderness will soon
Be driven from his remembrance, when his coarse
And brutal passions shall, with health, regain
Their former vigour.

C. of Hunt. It will, sure, be so.

Mary. What, then, should be my lot, were he to fly,
Or *thus* to stay at home! How should I, bred
In ease, in elegance, abroad, withstand,
Unpropt, these rude reforming times!

L. Reres. Nay some
Affirm that he 's resolved to fly; or else
Govern alone, by seizure of the Prince
His son.[23]

C. of Hunt. I 've also heard the same maintained;
Though, when before the Council, it is said,
His Grace of Glasgow's servant Hiegait, since,
Denied that Walcar had such a report
From him.

Mary. It seems but vague surmise. His weak
Attempts to pull me down I should disdain;
But, to affront me by a flight to France;
So ignominious; o'er the Continent,
Where, still admired, my fancy loves to dwell,
Loud publishing reports to my disgrace!
Black calumnies, to make me infamous![24]
E'er since Achaius leagued with Charlemagne,
The famed imperial father of his Queen,
In favour of the Pope, against the King
Of Lombardy, have closely been allied
The Scots and French by learning, and by blood,
Cemented by their common interest,
'Gainst english force each other to defend:[25]

---

[23] Rob. B. 4. 1567.

[24] Rob. Jan. 20. 1567.—Rob. v. 1. pp. 323—341.

[25] Hume's Hist. of the House of Douglas.—Monipennie's Abridgement of the Scots Chronicles.—"The royal ensign, which was figured like a dragon, was easily known. The lion with the double tressure, fleurs de lis, in memory of our ancient alliance with France, was then unknown." Sir D. Dalr. Ann. of Scot. A. D. 1138. *David* I. "David I. was held to be a perfect exemplar of a good king by Buchanan, whose principles are deemed unfavourable to monarchy." A. D. 1153. *David* I. "William (called the Lion, from his being the first scottish King who assumed a coat armorial; the Lion rampant having first appeared on his seal) king of Scots, dissatisfied

A league, religion renders still more dear,
Am I to forfeit now without a fault?
Is all my care to end in this? For this
Have I, with conjugal affection, spent
So many days with him in anxious pain,
Though 'mongst his friends, at Glasgow, yet myself
Away from this my court, and from my son?
In blooming health, remained shut up with foul
Disease, and peevish melancholy, through
The day, to hear, without, the croakings harsh
Of mournful crows, amongst the gloomy pines,
So sombre of themselves, so black, with rooks,
That hang on yonder steep, above the stream
That murmurs underneath, or, wheeling round
The solemn pile, on this ascent more slow,
To have my ears saluted with the wild
And piercing caws of sable jacks, above
The graves, and heaving turfs, and lettered tombs,
And figured monuments, innumerable,
That fill and crowd the intervening space:
From winter's cold, then torpid and benumbed,
Though quiet the dusky bats, at twilight raised,
In summer, with the insects preyed upon,
That, flitting giddy, through stupidity,
Alarm the sick apartment by their flaps
Against its darkening windows, ere the moon
Appears, to have assail their crystal panes
Fell drenching showers, in leaden drops; the storms,
The blustering winds of January roar
Around the walls and towers, or whistle through
The loops, and battlements above: At nights,

---

with Henry II. of England, sent Ambassadors to France to negociate an alliance against her; which is the first evidence of an alliance between France and Scotland." A. D. 1168. *William.* Also Chap. 1. vol. 3. *On the alliance between Charlemagne and Achaius king of Scotland.* Sir D. here, however, admits there was intercourse by letters, then, between Charlemagne and the Kings of the Scots; though not an alliance, or with one sovereign of all the Scots called Achaius. "If it be asked, when did the alliance between France and Scotland commence? I answer," says he, "when the two nations saw that mutual aid was necessary, and could be afforded. As early as I can judge, this concurrence of circumstances happened in the reign of William the Lion; and from that era I presume to date the alliance between France and Scotland." *Remarks on the History of Scotland,* Chapter I. *Alliance between Charlemagne and Achaius King of Scotland.* vol. 3.

From out the central spire, or steeple west,
Of the Cathedral, have my youthful blood
Repelled, and froze', with dismal screams of owls;
Breath-sucking owls, repeated from the wood;
And strange, unusual, intermitting sounds,
And frightful tolls, as every hour that strikes,
Returned by echoes numberless, afar,
And near, with sullen indistinctness deep,
And multiplying horrors; whilst below,
Within its fertile vale, the humbled Clyde,
Expanded, and fatigued, by frequent falls;
At Bonniton, at Corehouse, at Stonebyres;
And rippling sweeps from thence; the salmon's streams;
The otter's favourite haunts; its woods among,
And fruitful orchards; past old Hamilton,
Red Bothwell Castle's towers, and priory,
Of Blantyre; now at ease, upon its soft
And oozy bed, sleeps dully on: For this,
Have I prevailed upon him, to be near
The best advice, and with myself, to let
Me bring him here, to peaceful lodgings, nigh
The Palace, where I 've also fixed, beneath
His very room, and near his call: Have I,
In spite of his neglect while I was ill,
Attended him, e'er since, with kind and close
Solicitude, to bring him health, that I
Might suffer shame and future misery
Myself?—O cruel recompence![26]

L. Reres. We hope
The best; yet fear, alas! it will be so;
His passions are so much beyond his powers
Of understanding, and his gratitude.

Mary. Then rather had it been my fate to die
Of sorrow and chagrin at Rheims! To fall
Into the traps of England's envious Queen,
And her advisers, on my way to this!
A martyr to my son's existence here!
A struggling victim to the fever's rage
At Jedburgh, on leaving Hermitage!
A prey to melancholy, when retired
To lone Craigmillar's airy solitude,

---

[26] Rob. B. 4. 1567.—Whit. v. 3. p. 260.

With its memento of delightful France,
To feed its roots, and deepen its effects.[27]
C. of Arg. The gods forbid!
L. Reres. Though we had lost the King
Himself.
Mary. When she had first a conduct safe
Refused, for what have I escaped the snares
Of my deceitful rival, coming north,
To this my capital to be conveyed,
By the protecting fog that interposed,
When, by the parting gale, I had been tore
From the gay Continent, the only scene
Of my poor share of happiness, dissolved
In tears, whilst from my open couch, that graced
The galley's deck, above the feathered oars
That winged their way in measured dip and rise
Expanded slow, with longing lingering gaze,
And boding exclamations, taking leave
Of the retiring coast, with the return
Of yet another day:[28] For what have I,
Without disparagement to you my friends, *(to the Countesses of Huntly and Sutherland)*
When in the north, miraculously balked
The late Lord Huntly's power at Corrichie,
By there defeating him;[29] and, since the fresh
Conspiracy, encouraged from the south;
Excuse me, sister, now 't is done away; *(to the C. of*
That drove to arms his rival conqueror, *[Argyl.)*
And my protector then;[30] if now, the man
I 've since supported, and advanced to power,[31]
Is to involve my life in wretchedness! [years,
C. of Ath. Perhaps his youth may be the cause. With
My royal Mistress, yet, he may reclaim.
Mary. For him I slighted the remonstrance, first,
With all her Council, of th' offended Queen.[32]
Then fled, before the match, across the Forth,
To screen him from her black conspiracy,
Our brother with; a brother but in name; *(to the C. of*
Assisted by the Duke of Chatelherault,[33] *[Argyl.)*

---

[27] Rob. B. 3. 1560, 1561. [28] Rob. B. 3. 1561.
[29] Rob. Oct. 28. 1562. [30] Rob. July 1565.
[31] Melv. p. 58. [32] Melv. p. 60. [33] Melv. p. 56.

A ready help, of course, to such a plot,
With Murray:[34] and, when solemnized, to fix,
Secure to him my kingdom and myself,
For which I owe your loyal husband much,[35] *(to the C.*
Assembled all the force I could collect; *[of Athol.)*
With him, in gilded armour by my side,
Marched with the troops, rode with the foremost ranks,
Exposed my person, with my pistol charged,
Endured the hard fatigues of war, and drove
His enemies, at length, from hence, to seek
Protection underneath their treacherous friend.[36] [since!

L. Reres. What strange ingratitude has marked him

C. of Arg. When he arrived, he found you first at Wemyss,[37]

In Fife, as Lapland, for *good neighbours* famed.
Even then, indeed, to witchcraft charm was charged,
Th' infatuation of your Majesty;[38]
In you, so unaccountable it seemed,
Of England's realm the rightful sovereign,
The dowager of France, and Scotland's queen,
To slight, for him, such dazzling overtures.

Mary. Rejected all for him. The Archduke Charles
Of Germany:[39]—With its apparent heir,
The crown of Spain:—The splendour of the court
Of France again to visit, through the Duke
Of Anjou:—And the interest of the queen
Of England, with her handsome favourite's hand,
Her Dudley, Earl of Leicester's, as proposed;
Though through such influence as directed me,
In spite of his foul blemishes, in love
With him herself:[40]—Refused all these for him.
Yet, still, as if the compliments were far
Beneath the value of his great deserts,
I was unsatisfied, till with the high
Distinguished title of a King I 'd full
Invested him, that ranked it with my own!
Nay; though the Matrimonial Crown 's a gift
For parliament, not me, to give away;

---

[34] Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[35] Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[36] Melv. p. 57.—Rob. An. 1565, p. 183.
[37] Melv. p. 56.—Spotsw. L. 4.
[38] Rob. B. 3, 1565.—Tytl. p. 285.
[39] Melv. p. 32.
[40] Rob. B. 3, 1564.

My just prerogative I strained for him;
By proclamation hailed his title King,
And even precedence ordered it in writs!
For him, I power, perhaps, usurped for right,
By love made heedless of my people's claims.[41]—
Had I agreed to any match but this;
Should he, or fly, or unreformed remain!

C. of Arg. Perhaps he may remain; perhaps reform.
His jealousy declares that still he loves.[42]

L. Reres. Then, whence proceed his insults, and
If still he loves? [neglects,

C. of Ath. From being credulous.
From sensibility, by foes abused,
Beyond his powers to guide; and passions fierce,
Which he cannot retrain.

Mary. My grateful thanks
To each of you for your solicitudes.
How much I feel the value of your kind
Support, my noble friends, is far beyond
The powers of my expression to describe.
But, O ye saints, that it should come to this!
That I should wish to stab or drown myself![43]
That I, the worshipped idol, once, of all
Th' accomplished gallant youths of France; of gay
Admiring courts, and gazing multitudes;
Exposed upon a boisterous savage rock,
A butt to bigots' rage, and butchers' blows,
To brutal insolence and sacrilege,
Should thus, from grace, compassion move; become
An object for benevolence to ease!
The sport of wild ingratitude!—O heavens!—(*weeps.*)

(*A Pause. All seem much affected;* Reres *less so than the rest.*)

Attendant.

Attend. With your permission; the ambassador,
That late returned from England, comes to wait
Upon your Majesty.

---

[41] Rob. B. 3. 1565. B. 4, 1566. [42] Melv. p. 77.
[43] Melv. p. 81.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.

Mary (recovering herself.) Acquaint Sir James
We 're ready to receive him here. [*Exit Attendant.*
Compose
Yourselves, my friends.—Yet better times may come.

SIR JAMES MELVIL.

Good Melvil, long my faithful chamberlain,
We greet you well.
Melv. Thanks to my honoured Queen;—
And health to all.—That health which, late', I judged
I was to have been robbed of on the way.
C. of Hunt. What means Sir James?
Melv. My progress I pursued;
And had some time been with the storm engaged;
When peeping out from underneath my cloak,
Upraised to keep my hat upon my head,
A little farther on, like pillars fixed,
Immoveable and still, I saw a man
On either side the road I was to take,
As if they waited there for my approach.
I scarce had got between, when having seized
A shoulder each, they forced me to throw off
The mantling round my face, and give my name;
Whence I had come; and where I journeyed to:
Then looking with a cut-throat lanthorn, hid,
As if to satisfy themselves; they gave
A sign that seemed concerted; with their dirks,
Unwilling to be sheathed without mischief,
Ript open my cloak; and darted out of sight.—
There seems, somehow, to-night, besides the storm,
A strange commotion to pervade the town.
L. Reres. 'Tis giddy with the prospect of the Ball;
Increased by Sunday's previous idleness,[44]
On which, you know, by law, a market 's held.[45]
Melv. It may be so.—My errand is t' acquaint
Your Grace that Randolph, Murray's friend, and spy
Upon your Majesty,[46] th' ambassador

---

[44] Sunday was not so strictly and religiously observed then as now, A. D. 1829.—Hume, 1584, Note.—Whit. vol. iii. p. 271.—Maclaurin's Crim. Cases, No. 89, Note.
[45] Scots Acts, 1540, C. 122. [46] Melv. pp. 60, 89, 110.

Of England, means, to-morrow, to send off,
If this foul tempest hinder not, he said,
Despatches to his court.
Mary. Of what new broils
He 's kindled; what with fuel fed, and kept
On fire; to warm and cheer Elizabeth,
Give heat and comfort to her maiden heart,
Through his director Cecil.[47]
Melv. Yes; their way
To weaken is to first divide, distract,
Encourage faction, discords sow and hold
Alive, *divide and rule.* I left him leagued
In conference with fearless, turbulent Knox,
His, and the party's blustering trumpeter,
Against his old opponent Ross, your friend
Established long, with all the "hypocritis
"And monsters, the Gray Freers,"[48] and wicked rabble
Of antichrist the pope, denouncing wrath;[49]
Contriving baits to lure the swinish mob,
Inflamed by transmigrations from himself;
Like the famed herd that self-destruction sought;
To thoughtless acts of riot leading on,
Insensible, unconscious of a crime,
Through outrage mad, to sacrilege and treason,
Which, though a protestant, I deprecate.[50]
C. of Athol. 'Tis like his brutal rage and bigotry.
Mary. "To-morrow."—It is well.—Come then, in-
Us, Melvil, how this paragon, this gay [form
Elizabeth received you, on your last
Most welcome embassy, at James's birth.
'Twill please my friends, to hear how she 's belied,
In point of loveliness and elegance.
The worsted hose, to keep her legs in heat,
As well as their contents, are always hid;
But, how was 't dyed, what colour was her hair!
In her Italian dress with flowing locks,
Red, orange, yellow, purple, green, or blue?
Or all, bent like a rainbow round her face,
That, like a cloud, foretold a future storm? [gold,
Melv. Red, flaming red,[51] that, mixed with burnished

---

[47] Melv. p. 109. [48] Knox.
[49] Rob. B. 2. 1559. B. 3. 1563.
[50] Melv. p. 58. [51] Hume, Eliz. C. 11. 1564.

And sparkling diamonds, made her, dressed in white,
As snow, chill emblem of virginity,
Look like a lighted candle centre placed,
For the convenience of her suite prepared,
And somewhat shortened by its former use;
Her face the wrinkled wick within its shine,
By the excess of its own light obscured.

Mary. Fear not, though aught should seem ridicu-
The English Juno is not here, to box [lous,
Your ears, as she her courtiers' does; or beat,
And cut and break the fingers of our friends,[52]
By God's death! stoutly swearing all the while,
As her own maids of honour might expect,
If told they 'd listen to your narrative.
Though, like her tool, our base-born prior here,
She 's illegitimate,[53] and wears a crown,
Were I supported as I ought, would grace,
As mine, its owner's head, she is by blood
My cousin, and my sister, though usurped,
From rank as sovereign of our sister state.
Your trust will be repaid with secresy.

Melv. The blow was too severe; your Majesty
Had gained too much to furnish ridicule,
As first, with food; for she no sooner heard
The news, though then displaying to her Court
At Greenwich, at a ball, her levity,
In her ship-tire, of the first rate, full sail,
All canvass spread and fair before the wind,
Gliding a head a train of brigantines,
And pinnaces, and pleasure boats, and yachts,
Bedecked obediently about her wake,
As if by adverse sudden squall surprized,
Than all her joy was damped; her head reclined
Upon her arm; she sighed at her defeat;
And bitterly complained, you now were hailed
The happy mother of a healthy Son,
While she was left a barren stock![54]

Mary. Decreed,
Just heaven! that with her life her guilt may end!
The sceptre now she holds, 't is I should wield:

---

[52] Hume, Eliz. C. 7. [53] Melv. pp. 23, 28.
[54] Melv. pp. 69, 70.—Rob. B. 3. 1565.—B. 4. 1566.

By right my temples 't is her crown should bind:
The throne she sits upon 't is I should fill:
The English arms I bear legitimate.[55]
'T is she assumes them, base-born she, usurps
The power belongs to me, and hates me for 't!
Abhors me for the justice of my claims;
Her own defects! her own deformities!
My rights, and charms, she equally detests.
In showing thus her spite, she 's been sincere,
At least for once. That she would always act
With equal honesty! You see, my friends,
How likely 't is to baffle me, she meant,
At Rizio's shocking death.

Melv. The crafty daw
Shall sooner with the lovely swan exchange
Its darkened plumage. Ere I had obtained,
Next day, an interview, she had assumed
Her artful veil,[56] for her ship-tire, her tire
Vailant and close. She thanked me, graciously,
For the agreeable intelligence.
Yet oft she showed, beneath the guise, a sore
That pained her to the quick. It seemed, to some,
Her *excellent beauties* all were nipt at once,
Through flannel stuffings, and through worsted hose,
By the cold blast of this great northern news,
Though almost hid by her protecting skreens
Of scarfs, and coats, and cuffs, and caps, and rings,
And jewels, monstrous ruff, and farthingale;[57]
Enormous ruff, compared both with herself,
And subjects', as by proclamation cliped;
With fan, to furnish breath and lighten them,
And sheltered deep by subtle Cecil's self,
Her gaudy ornamented oracle,
Behind her English rose a thorn appeared,
That all its shade of leaves could not obscure.

Mary. At least, her *jewels* would be beautiful—
Yes, 't is as well "*her excellent beauties all,*"
With the sweet taper of her virgin *waist,*

---

[55] Rob. B. 2. 1559.—B. 4. 1566.
[56] Melv. p. 70.—Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[57] Hume, Eliz. c. 7.—Rob. B. 3. 1561.—Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting, v. 1.

Should *straight* appear, by these contrivances;
As crooked counsels courtesies conceal:
In twists, and wiles, and vanities ornate,
Alike the Mistress and the Minister.[58]—

L. Reres. I wish he had, at Musselburgh, been killed;
Or, since, upon his embassy to this.— [blood

Mary. Were all my neighbours; subjects; even by
Those closer bound, like you, *(to Melvil)* and these my
About my person now.—I 'll think no more [friends
Of your late courteous present to the King.
I heard the risk you ran at Ricci's death,[59]
With Athol's, and with Huntly's husbands there,
Had quite estranged you from his Majesty;
But this, it seems, has been a false report. [thanks!

Melv. Thanks to your Grace! My royal Mistress,
As I your favour prize, I shun offence.
Had I been told how much he was admired,
The spaniel had been sent another course.[60]

Mary. How happy are we, sisters, in a friend
So sure. But, who comes here! What noise is that?—

[EARLS *of* ATHOL *and* SUTHERLAND; *followed by two of the* QUEEN'S *Guards; dragging in, by his plaid, an ill-looking Man, with his bonnet off in his hand, and a large highland purse and dirk-sheath in front of his philabeg.*]

Earls Athol—Sutherland——But, who is he?

E. of Athol.—As th' Earl of Sutherland and I came
To wait upon your Majesty; behind [down
The city wall, without the Cowgate Port,
We saw two rogues, as if upon the watch.
As we proceeded on, they followed us
With equal pace, it seemed, with foul intent;
And, skulking, kept below the southern bank.
As we, by these our lanthorns, could discern,
Thus cautiously they stole, till, in a point,
It opens o'er the mead to Salisbury Craigs;
And to St Leonard's height upon the right,

---

[58] Melv. p. 89. [59] Melv. p. 64.—Craw. pref. p. 37.
[60] Rob. Aug. 3. 1566.—Append. No. 17.

When, having lost their skreen, they nearer drew.
Upon the sudden, wheeling round, we closed
With them; and, after struggling long, we seized
This man, and brought him here. This dirk I wrenched
From him, whilst lifted up, to give a stab
Behind. The other, seeing him o'erpowered,
Got free; and, favoured by the night, escaped.
(*Gives the dirk to the guard.*)

C. of Ath. My Lord, what ails your hand?—Why
[have you 't bound?
The handkerchief is filled with blood.

E. of Ath. A scratch;
A trifling cut, in warding off a blow
From Sutherland, aimed by the one that fled. [life.

E. of Suth. To you, my Lord; my friend; I owe my

Mary. As I rejoice, sincerely, 't was no worse;
Still, I lament, my Lord, the wound you 've got.
But, what could be their end; their black design.—
What led you thus, to dog these noble lords?

Man. (*advancing, and kneeling.*) As I for mercy beg
I had no purpose else in what I did, [before your Grace,
But to obtain the noble earls' names;
And know their route. What afterwards occurred,
Was all in self-defence. From balked, and foiled,
And disappointed rage. We neither sought
Their purses, nor their lives.

Mary. Of what import
Were names, and routes, to you?

Man. Of none. Unless,
Perhaps, to those by whom we were employed.
But, who these were, or what they farther meant,
In consequence of what we should relate,
I know no more than does your Majesty.
Our orders we received when in the dark,
From one that, lately, stopt us in the streets;
And, in the dark, we were to give account
Of what we knew, when summoned from the post
At which 't was fixed we were to take our stand.

Mary. Is this the whole?

Man. The whole; as, now, I live.

C. of Athol. 'T is strange. What can it mean?

Man. Between ourselves,
We ventured to conclude, though innocent

The part to us assigned, that it arose
From some deep civil, or religious grudge,
Which sought a proper place to give it vent:
Or plot, their noble presence might have marred.
Mary. It may be so. But, lest he has the truth
Concealed, conduct him to confinement close,
Until a stricter scrutiny takes place.
If foul his ways, he boots, of course, must wear;
But still, I hope, he 'll need them not.—Withdraw.—
(The Guards go off, with the Man in custody.)
Meantime, my Lords, from this you must return
Some other road than that by which you came.
E. of Ath. Your Grace's kind advice I shall obey;
Though grudge, against myself, I know of none. [view.
E. of Suth. Some others, sure, they must have had in
Mary. That I believe: no foes you 've in the State.
Yet, still, there 's need, in turbulent times like these,
For care.—Good Melvil, as to the import
Of your intelligence. If aught, to-night,
Occurs, to write her Grace of England, south,
By this conveyance to be forwarded,
I 'll send it ere you join us at the Masque.
Melv. I wait your Majesty's commands.
Mary. Adieu!—*(Exit Melvil.*
My faithful friends, may I, excused, now beg
To have a private interview with Reres?——
You all have promised us your company,
To grace our Masque to-night.—Till then, farewell.——
(Exeunt all but Lady Reres.

(Aside; after a pause.)

Can all I 've seen and heard, besides surmise,
Be the effects of plots, of jealous spite,
Of envious calumny, against the Earl?—
'T is possible.——'T were madness then to act.—
But; what can mean these spies that fill the town;
To take the names and routes of those who stir
Abroad, of note enough to give them weight.—
L. Reres. Your Grace is not unwell?
Mary. Come near me, Reres,
My trusty confidant, and lend thy aid,

To strengthen me, or ease my pain, condemned
To struggle underneath a load of fears,
And dreadful apprehensions.

L. Reres. What is't grieves,
Disturbs my mistress? Does the pain you 're oft
Attacked with now torment your aching side,
And threaten worse? But let me know. Though bought
With death itself, I 'd lay it down to bring
Relief.

life

Mary. I think thou would'st; and were it not
That heaven has given a Son to raise my hopes,
With some few friends like thee to cherish me,
I were unable to support my lot.—
My long minority, and residence
Abroad; my mother's but deputed reign,
A foreigner; a proud nobility,
Rough, independent, fierce, untractable,
The petty tyrant, each, in his domain,
O'er savage clans of freebooters and thieves;
With the seditious tenets of Reform;
Encouraged factions, turbulence, misrule,
Rebellion, anarchy, and insolence;
Raised insubordination to the height
You see, and I unfortunately feel,
With anguish, fearful and distracted feel,
Alas, without the power of remedy!
I 've got, 't is true, from pitying heaven, a Son;
How oft, even so, of late have I been driven,
Amidst such gross and brutal disrespects,
Such factious frenzy, and fanatic rage,
T' implore that death, the friend of hopeless grief,
With the destruction of our Catholic faith,
Would finish out the sum of my distress![61]
So far from worse would threat'nings such appear,
And yet compared, these insults, what are they?
Good God! What 's pain of body? to the rack,
The torture of a mind disordered, torn
By jarring passions; on the verge, perhaps,
Of implicated guilt, and black despair?
Writhen with anguish inexpressible!—

---

[61] Melv. p. 81.—Rob. Dissert. 12 Dec. 1566.

But, why misfortunes fixt anticipate;
If unavoidable; decreed in heaven;
Wrote down, in blackest ink within the book
Of fate, indelible!—"Perhaps;" nay, on
The very brink of ruin, if allowed
The future of to judge from what is o'er;
From what of my prophetic morning dream
Already, as foreshown, has come to pass.—
To-morrow, was it not, that Melvil said
Intelligence goes off for England, Reres;
From Randolph, her incendiary here,
By Cecil sent to watch, and discord sow?[62]

L. Reres. It was: provided this strange tumult cease;
The heavens befriend; and the foul storm abates.

Mary. It may be, it is fittest for the news.
'T were inconsistent to convey foul tales
In weather fair, if such they should turn out.
What think'st thou we should write, in compliment,
To carry on this loving intercourse
'Twixt sister queens, dear cousins too, by blood
Cemented, as their kingdoms by the sea?
Although, besides, 't is by the crown I wear,
Great Britain should be joined, the Albion Queens,[63]
Each other's bane, unnaturally divide,
At present; since it is the will of heaven,
Howe'er, it should be so, it must be right,
And 't is our duty patiently to wait.

L. Reres. Inquiries past, I see not any thing
So interesting as your Majesty's,
The Prince's health; and prospect of the King's
Recovery.

Mary. If he shall weather safe
This night; this sad tempestuous gloomy night,
That even the messenger is frightened at,
And none but fearless Murray durst despise.
I ne'er before thought Murray's love so strong

---

[62] Melv. pp. 89, 105, 107, 109, 115.

[63] One of Banks's tragedies is entitled *The Island Queens, The Albion Queens, or The Death of Mary Queen of Scotland;* but it does not adhere to history; although it is erroneously said, and seems to profess to do so.

As this, to his fair Wife our intimate.
I wish some other cause; some selfish view,
He thinks of greater moment, may not lie
Beneath the rose; the English rose, I mean,
With the sly thorn, Elizabeth, behind,
And under it concealed, to prick him on.—
What say'st thou, Reres?
L. Reres. 'Twere like, indeed, his way;
To bring his plot to bear, and then absent
Him' at the issue: To avoid the risk,
And reap the fruits.
Mary. Have you heard no reports,
Of late; no flying rumours, tending deep
T' impeach a powerful subject's loyalty? [hopes
L. Reres. Some teasings I have had, that building
On love, the Earl had caused the King's disease;
And meditates on his destruction still.
But how could that refer to the Lord James?
Mary. You know he was the Earl of Bothwell's foe;
And, though his rival still, of late, has shewn
A strange, unnatural concern, to back
His views, and help him on. The clemency
He shewed at Corrichie; the gang's remains,
The predatory border moss-troopers,
Of whom, untried, the twenty-eight he hanged[64]
At once upon the spot; his charity;
His godly zeal t' extirpate or reform;
That all should be prepared before they die;
His genuine christian purity proclaim,
And piety sincere. He, and his friends,
Can hide with ease, just now, their deepest schemes,
And darkest deeds, beneath religion's cloak;
As *The Religion*, upstart guise, assumed;
And, thus, conceal what spite alone suggests,
Or the insatiate thirst for worldly power.
His haughtiness, by spiritual pride increased,
Though most adverse to Christianity,
And a contempt for every other faith,
Is held even laudable. The King and he
Are likewise deadly foes.[65] 'Tis not two months

---

[64] Buch. L. 17.

[65] Rob. B. 4. Dec. 1566.

While this my husband, and myself, retired,
Were at Craigmillar Castle, that he brought
The Earl, with Maitland, Huntly, and Argyl;
Huntly, at whose expence he 's Murray's Earl;
To crave forgiveness for his friend, and black
Associates foul in Rizio's massacre,[66]
That heightened my disgust, and him recalled
As if to instigate to punishment;
To punish what was done to serve himself,
When he had basely courted him in vain;[67]
Our Rizio courted first, then caused his death!
As the return, presuming on the force
Of the abuse, he offered to assist
In throwing off the King by a divorce;
Or even to despatch him any way;
Though he himself through Morton seemed to act,
To dupe my husband to such gross affront,
To blast my fame, increase the opened breach,
Oblige the envious Queen, and kill my hopes
In the delightful prospect from a Son!
They dwelt on his ingratitude and faults:
They held them both to be incorrigible:
And though I stood against the utmost power
Of Maitland's eloquence, 't was so contrived,
By secret, artful hints, and indirect
Disclosures deep of consequences sure,
It raised, as Murray's instrument thus charmed
Our ears, aspiring Bothwell's views, and heaped
Fresh fuel on his kindling thoughts. He shewed
To Bothwell, in the workings of my mind,
My indignation at the King; and moved,
And led, and spurred him on; through Lethington,
His fascinating voice; to the belief
Of acquiescence in, I'm confident,
The boldest measures he could venture at.
The cause of Morton almost seemed forgot
In the solicitude to stain the King,
And show their approbation at his fall.
This very night, if aught there is of truth

---

[66] Rob. B. 4. 9 March 1566. [67] Melv. p. 63.—Rob. B. 4. 1566.

In trusted morning dreams, by which of fate,
Through the mind's subtile eye exhibited,
The favoured friends have been allowed to dive
Into the secrets of futurity,
The Earl of Bothwell, instigated thus,
With his recovery, prevents his flight,
And finishes his course. The latent sparks,
Discovered once, of enterprise, and love,
So easy 't is, by artful train, to light,
And kindle up to a destructive flame
Ungovernable, spreading wide and far.

L. Reres. But, may I humbly ask your Majesty
Now that th' Italian Cardan, famous round,
For knowledge in the sciences occult,
For magic and astrology, is gone,[68]
What other preternatural help you had
From gifted seer deep skilled, as one should be,
Like our famed Scottish Merlin sighted far,
Who at Drummelzier, near the Tweed, now lies
Beneath an aged thorn, on Powsail burn,[69]
That, for conjectures, could with certainty
Explain the shallow, shadowy pictures shewn
Of roving incoherence dimmed by sleep.
The dream may have been misinterpreted,
Through ignorance, by some pretending quack,
If not, from spite, on purpose to deceive;
For, not from Bothwell's self would seem to spring
Enough to justify belief, through fancy's fears,
Of such a dread event.

Mary. The dream I dreamt,
Which, from my doubts, till now, that it in part
Has come to pass, I 've since kept undivulged,
No skilled interpreter requires: its own
It is; so plain it reads. No. If 't is true,
He hazards it alone, upon the grounds
I have suggested now.[70] Of my distress
The cause is this.—As well you know, in spite
Of all the eloquence of Lethington,
My learned secretary and my friend,[71]

---

[68] Melv. p. 14. [69] Dr Pennecuik's Descrip. of Tweeddale, with Notes, *Of the Tweed.*
[70] Tytl. p. 1. c. 4. and note. [71] Melv. p. 79.

Though Murray's tool, I checked of a divorce
The plan; else by malicious retrospect,
It had, at once, been turned against my Son,
And rendered null the Marriage, from the first.[72]
If such, to please Elizabeth, their aim,
Or to assist the Prior in his views,
As nature did before at Ricci's death,
I have defeated it. But scarcely had
My brother, with his smooth-tongued orator,
Withdrawn beyond the outer northern gate,
When his insinuating poison spread
Its baneful influence o'er my open mind;
Thus sapt the ramparts I had raised against
Th' encroachments of my favour on myself,
My honour and my conscience to defend.[73]
All his pernicious doctrines glid, at length,
By stealth into my mind; called in a crowd
Of new ideas; overturned at once
My guardian principles, and left my will
A prey to fate, and Bothwell's gallantry.
Judge of th' effect of this upon a man
Like Hepborne.[74]—But; I've more to rest upon
Than powerful inference, to generate
The dread I feel.[75]—One melancholy night,
When at Craigmillar Castle, ere I went
To Glasgow, and the King's disease assumed
A change propitious, I to rest retired,
With aspirations left unsatisfied,
Full of disquietudes and anxiety,
Impatient to find out, if possible,
And have unfolded to my ardent view
The issue of this great contingency,
So interesting from its mystery,
Of eager curiosity the whet,
To all, and, in its consequence, to me.
'Twas since the rumour spread so currently
That I had disappeared.[76]

---

[72] The marriage was celebrated on 29th July 1565, and James was born on 19th June 1566.
[73] Protestation by Huntly and Argyl. Tytl. p. 284.
[74] Rob. B. 4. 1566. [75] Tytl. p. 155.
[76] Rob. Aug. 8. 1566. App. No. 17.

L. Reres. Was 't since?
Mary. It was.
You know the range of western hills, from hence
Which runs toward the south. There, I had heard
That underneath the farthest off, in ken
Scarce from the Castle visible, where ends
The vale of Lothian, and of Pictland, clear
Through which the Esk descends, apparently,
That in the open distance terminates
Above, on this side, in a pastoral dean
That skirts its base, there lived an aged hag,
In dreary studious solitude; deep read,
As 't was affirmed, in marks, and lines, and dreams,
And spells, by which to drag reluctantly
From Saturn's gloomy cave a premature
And short display of persons and events,
As yet, unfit to bear the cheerful light.
L. Reres. I had forgot; the carline Neps, I guess.
Mary. The same. As I am told, as thick as spots
On leopard, branded o'er, and fast secured,
With bonds infernal of allegiance black.
L. Reres. And that with the, as currently believed,
Good neighbour of St Andrews o'er the frith,
Fell carline, cursed Nicknavin,[77] and old Nick,
She holds her sabbaths at North Berwick Kirk,[78]
Midway between; whilst oft, at other times,
With other friends, less noted and more near,
In shape of purring cat, or hare, or toad,
Or crawling reptile else, or moping owl,
At midnight deep, she meets, to generate
Foul mischief, when their hootings ominous
Are heard, from out the dreary solitude,
And dark recess, or from the storm descend,
In strange, confused, and interchanging sounds.
Mary. Until the clock had told the night was past,
I sound had slept. I then awoke disturbed:
And on again my sinking down to rest;
By impulse driven I was too weak to stem,
And flying from the tortures I endured,
To seek relief from aught my doubts would cure,

---

[77] Crawf. 1569. p. 112. [78] Melv. pp. 194, 195.

I dreamed as plain as if all done and seen,
What first I now distinctly shall disclose,
In secrecy, in confidence to you.—
I thought that, when with privacy prepared,
And mounted on my favourite steady pad,
I with a trusty servant, ere 't was eve,
And late in autumn when 't was clear and calm,
Armed each with wands of mountain ash,
With scarlet worsted threads entwisted round,
And I with amber necklace safe begirt,
Set out toward the hills; for oft I 'd learnt
That "hardy row'n tree with red thread,
"And honey coloured amber bead,
"Pat a' the witches to their speed."

L. Reres. I recollect how much 't was talked of then,
Some months ago, that none where you were gone
Could tell. Had you, in *truth*, set out, I 'd known
The night.

Mary. I said 't was *since* the dream appeared.
It seemed in harvest, too, I sallied forth.—
Along Mid-Lothian's varied vale I heard;
Increasing still the general stillness more;
At intervals, the rural lowings long
And loud of cattle satisfied, with milk
Distended udders home returning slow,
From pastures rich, to sounds in unison
From cowherd's tooting horn monotonous,
Of their own growth, and suited to their ears;
But pleasing, as the rustic signs of peace
And plenty with content. From Pentland Hills,
Seen west beyond the vale, as I approached,
I was delighted with, upon my right,
The warblings, soft and shrill, of shepherd's pipe;
So blythe, and full of gaiety and glee;
Enlivening height and glen with melody,
Until the sun retired beyond the range.
The last concluding air the shepherd played,
More serious, slow, and solemn than the rest,
Seemed, at the close, to be an evening hymn
Of gratitude to the Almighty God
Of heaven and earth, of goodness infinite,
In whom alone he trusted, for his lot

The hay was mow
made; removed, a
The meadows clear
were left, a
to graze.
When I had passed
busy bands below
Of joyous reapers
pers, midst their
fields
With cordial chorus
chasing as they sped
And to the promise
plenty sang

Of health, of innocence, of competence,
And happiness. The gratitude so placed,
And confidence in God alone; in Him,
So justly and so wisely placed; I felt,
As a reflective censure deep. I felt
My own ingratitude and folly; blessed
So far beyond, so far above the swain,
With gifts and destinies, so thanklessly
Returned by the disloyal errand, full
Of diffidence, I then was going on.
My conscience smote, but stopped me not; so bent
I was, it turned me not; I travelled still;
With haste, spurred blindly forward to my aim;
Of all regardless, but to gratify
My rash and baneful curiosity;
Like Eve, be what it would the consequence,
Of flying in the face of heaven by search,
From bad inferior mortal instruments,
By stealth, into the book divine of fate,
Insulting it, defying secrecy.
When I had now advanced some lonely miles,
To these all-soothing notes, succeeded from the left,
And from the mossy moors and bents, with night,
The chuckings hoarse of wandering grouse; thus led,
The eye no longer able, by the ear
To find each other in the dark, amidst
The heath, so like in colour to themselves.
As when awake I 'd seen the Pentland Hills
In passing to Dumfries, I thought beneath
Their changing summits, round, and conic, green,
And brown, as grass or heath prevailed, I rode
Along their varied skirts, descending now
Into a bashful dell, or rising o'er
A forward brow, with sykes, and braes, and bents,
And mossy moors, extending wide beyond,
Upon the left, till I had gained, some ten
Miles hence, a bold ascent, along the foot
Of which, at giddy distance, ran the Esk,
That, crossing from the parted hills, the right
Upon, through pointed rocks, by contrast wild,
In hollow murmurs, struck into the still,
And silent air a fresh solemnity.

A while, ere I could venture down to take
The ford, with awe-struck horror shrunk, I paused
Involuntarily. Enough of things
Were eyed, and heard, as to the roused and hot
Imagination, ushered into play,
Could leave to each impression widest range.
All round was seen, yet but by halves, and through
Gigantic indistinctness. From the Esk
Beneath, at distance deep, a sparkle stole
Up, through some trees, from the reflected moon,
Upon the left, at times, amidst the gloom,
Disturbing its repose; and on the right,
Behind the hills, of an unvaried tint,
A sable curtain, by discordance, stamped
More strong the general effect. Beyond
The burn, a solitary pass the dean
Led to, its termination marked by two
Diverging rocks of conic shape. Ascends
From that upon the right a verdant hill;
And o'er the other's base I could discern,
Upon its farther southern side, a light
And puny breath of smoke aspiring slow,
Like flaky pillar, to the pale-faced orb
Of night above, from out the dreary Hut.[79]

L. Reres. The place, as fame reports, is strange indeed:
Around the Sybil's Cave, in Italy,
There cannot be more objects suitable.
Here, on the channel of our rapid Esk,
O'er mid ascent, there oozes from the hill
Upon the south, a spring, that by its powers
Astonishing, like the fell gorgon head,
Converts each substance found within its reach
To callous stone: And from the conic rocks
As porpesse foul, or famous dolphin swift
Before a hurricane, or some event
Of fearful consequence, in playful mood,
Neps has been seen by the affrighted clown
Upon her broom, to gambol, bound, and leap
Across the pass at nights, from point to point,

---

[79] Scenery edition of the Gentle Shepherd, with Views and Descriptions, *Mause's Cottage, &c.*—Dr Pennecuik's Works, with Notes, *Of the North Esk.*

As quick as bird pent up within its cage;
As forked lightning 'twixt two thunder clouds;
Or dancing meteor in the teeming air;
And hence these rocks are called the Carline's Leaps.
Within the upper dean, two mounts, detached,
Are placed upon the flat; two perfect cones,
Of equal size; and equidistant from
A higher height, of oval shape between,
Cast like a coffin covered with a pall:
The hither fronts a deep cascade, which down
The mountain's brow descends, projecting o'er
A vein of variegated marble, red
And white, that when the snow is thawed, or rain
Is from the summit-bursted-cloud poured down,
A noisy leap displays on the Lin-burn,
Its stream; the farther stands before the arch
Of subterranean sombre passage, like
The ruined mouth of furnace heated once,
Or robbed, or yet unglutted catacomb,
Which issues from its base; and up the slope
Between, that dips into the dean, a range
Of pits, the Seven Caldrons named, seem scooped
From out the vein, by preternatural means,
To suit, if turned aside, the spouting fall,
And boilers' furnace at the southern end.
About the pass, and conic rocks behind
The hovel, ancient urns with ashes filled,
And bones collected into chests of flags,
Lie buried, though a scene of solitude,
As if had once been there a Pictish town;
With, near it, north, below, the round Girth-hill;
Atop, yet terraced on the farther side;
Its druid justice-seat, and sanctuary:
A rumbling well, and spring medicinal:
By mermaid haunted, and her house within 't
A lake upon a height without supply,
Or outlet visible: a pillared rock
Of tower-like form, the issue facing full
Of current, under ground, that enters far
Above; all strike the wondering traveller. [been,

Mary. Even more than these; had wonders greater
Or had the sun been stopt to show the whole;
To me had kept unknown, till now disclosed;
For farther than the object of my search, the Cruve,

I went not in my dream, and scarce so far,
When I across the stream had got, and rose
Aslant, by its worn entrance wild, the pass
Into, I thought, I could have ventured up;
For, just as I had left the ford, a screech
From out the wood, below, assailed my ear,
That echoed frightful the deep glen along;
Another bird of night, with leaden wing,
Flew thwart my head to meet its screaming mate;
And, as I turned the strait, about the curl,
The flaky, slow, still, solemn, pillared breath,
Of whitened, rising vapour, I observed,
Before the moon, a dusky dizzy bat,
Of more than common size, kept flitting round,
Unnatural, to me as it appeared,
And crossing it, as if by binding charm
Restrained and guided from within to hold
The course it steered, while in the air it wheeled
Incessantly, above the dismal Hut.—
To my attendant, when I 'd given in charge
My horse; had grasped, with trembling hand, my rod
Of service; and had forced the fastened latch
That held the door; for other guard was here,
Through poverty, superfluous; groping slow,
My passage dark and doubtful, o'er a fire,
Scarce visible through the surrounding smoke,
I found, low squatted on a little stool,
At last, the gifted Witch I travelled for;
As hunched as withered ape, or loathsome toad,
Or sable cat that kept her company.

L. Reres. The resolution of your Majesty;
Though 'tis beyond a female's fortitude
As usually possessed; had scarce, I doubt,
But in a dream, to such a scene at night
Have made you venture thus, without a guard;
Howe'er impelled to know futurity.

Mary. No creature else seem'd near, or out or in;
Save a poor coney, that I saw, with ears
Erect, steal fearful forth its flaming eyes,
As I appeared, from underneath her seat,
And on the instant hid itself; to join,
Beneath her bed, a pie-bald guinea-pig,
The stool behind, that, with an urchin, poked

As this, to his fair Wife our intimate.
I wish some other cause; some selfish view,
He thinks of greater moment, may not lie
Beneath the rose; the English rose, I mean,
With the sly thorn, Elizabeth, behind,
And under it concealed, to prick him on.—
What say'st thou, Reres?
L. Reres. 'Twere like, indeed, his way;
To bring his plot to bear, and then absent
Him' at the issue: To avoid the risk,
And reap the fruits.
Mary. Have you heard no reports,
Of late; no flying rumours, tending deep
T' impeach a powerful subject's loyalty? [hopes
L. Reres. Some teasings I have had, that building
On love, the Earl had caused the King's disease;
And meditates on his destruction still.
But how could that refer to the Lord James?
Mary. You know he was the Earl of Bothwell's foe;
And, though his rival still, of late, has shewn
A strange, unnatural concern, to back
His views, and help him on. The clemency
He shewed at Corrichie; the gang's remains,
The predatory border moss-troopers,
Of whom, untried, the twenty-eight he hanged[64]
At once upon the spot; his charity;
His godly zeal t' extirpate or reform;
That all should be prepared before they die;
His genuine christian purity proclaim,
And piety sincere. He, and his friends,
Can hide with ease, just now, their deepest schemes,
And darkest deeds, beneath religion's cloak;
As *The Religion*, upstart guise, assumed;
And, thus, conceal what spite alone suggests,
Or the insatiate thirst for worldly power.
His haughtiness, by spiritual pride increased,
Though most adverse to Christianity,
And a contempt for every other faith,
Is held even laudable. The King and he
Are likewise deadly foes.[65] 'Tis not two months

---

[64] Buch. L. 17. [65] Rob. B. 4. Dec. 1566.

While this my husband, and myself, retired,
Were at Craigmillar Castle, that he brought
The Earl, with Maitland, Huntly, and Argyl;
Huntly, at whose expence he 's Murray's Earl;
To crave forgiveness for his friend, and black
Associates foul in Rizio's massacre,[66]
That heightened my disgust, and him recalled
As if to instigate to punishment;
To punish what was done to serve himself,
When he had basely courted him in vain;[67]
Our Rixio courted first, then caused his death!
As the return, presuming on the force
Of the abuse, he offered to assist
In throwing off the King by a divorce;
Or even to despatch him any way;
Though he himself through Morton seemed to act,
To dupe my husband to such gross affront,
To blast my fame, increase the opened breach,
Oblige the envious Queen, and kill my hopes
In the delightful prospect from a Son!
They dwelt on his ingratitude and faults:
They held them both to be incorrigible:
And though I stood against the utmost power
Of Maitland's eloquence, 't was so contrived,
By secret, artful hints, and indirect
Disclosures deep of consequences sure,
It raised, as Murray's instrument thus charmed
Our ears, aspiring Bothwell's views, and heaped
Fresh fuel on his kindling thoughts. He shewed
To Bothwell, in the workings of my mind,
My indignation at the King; and moved,
And led, and spurred him on; through Lethington,
His fascinating voice; to the belief
Of acquiescence in, I'm confident,
The boldest measures he could venture at.
The cause of Morton almost seemed forgot
In the solicitude to stain the King,
And show their approbation at his fall.
This very night, if aught there is of truth

---

[66] Rob. B. 4. 9 March 1566. [67] Melv. p. 63.—Rob. B. 4. 1566.

In trusted morning dreams, by which of fate,
Through the mind's subtile eye exhibited,
The favoured friends have been allowed to dive
Into the secrets of futurity;
The Earl of Bothwell, instigated thus,
With his recovery, prevents his flight,
And finishes his course. The latent sparks,
Discovered once, of enterprise, and love,
So easy 't is, by artful train, to light,
And kindle up to a destructive flame
Ungovernable, spreading wide and far.

L. Reres. But, may I humbly ask your Majesty
Now that th' Italian Cardan, famous round,
For knowledge in the sciences occult,
For magic and astrology, is gone,[68]
What other preternatural help you had
From gifted seer deep skilled, as one should be,
Like our famed Scottish Merlin sighted far,
Who at Drummelzier, near the Tweed, now lies
Beneath an aged thorn, on Powsail burn,[69]
That, for conjectures, could with certainty
Explain the shallow, shadowy pictures shewn
Of roving incoherence dimmed by sleep.
The dream may have been misinterpreted,
Through ignorance, by some pretending quack,
If not, from spite, on purpose to deceive;
For, not from Bothwell's self would seem to spring
Enough to justify belief, through fancy's fears,
Of such a dread event.

Mary. The dream I dreamt,
Which, from my doubts, till now, that it in part
Has come to pass, I 've since kept undivulged,
No skilled interpreter requires: its own
It is; so plain it reads. No. If 't is true,
He hazards it alone, upon the grounds
I have suggested now.[70] Of my distress
The cause is this.—As well you know, in spite
Of all the eloquence of Lethington,
My learned secretary and my friend,[71]

---

[68] Melv. p. 14. [69] Dr Pennecuik's Descrip. of Tweeddale, with Notes, *Of the Tweed.*
[70] Tytl. p. 1. c. 4. and note. [71] Melv. p. 79.

Though Murray's tool, I checked of a divorce
The plan; else by malicious retrospect,
It had, at once, been turned against my Son,
And rendered null the Marriage, from the first.[72]
If such, to please Elizabeth, their aim,
Or to assist the Prior in his views,
As nature did before at Ricci's death,
I have defeated it. But scarcely had
My brother, with his smooth-tongued orator,
Withdrawn beyond the outer northern gate,
When his insinuating poison spread
Its baneful influence o'er my open mind;
Thus sapt the ramparts I had raised against
Th' encroachments of my favour on myself,
My honour and my conscience to defend.[73]
All his pernicious doctrines glid, at length,
By stealth into my mind; called in a crowd
Of new ideas; overturned at once
My guardian principles, and left my will
A prey to fate, and Bothwell's gallantry.
Judge of th' effect of this upon a man
Like Hepborne.[74]—But; I've more to rest upon
Than powerful inference, to generate
The dread I feel.[75]—One melancholy night,
When at Craigmillar Castle, ere I went
To Glasgow, and the King's disease assumed
A change propitious, I to rest retired,
With aspirations left unsatisfied,
Full of disquietudes and anxiety,
Impatient to find out, if possible,
And have unfolded to my ardent view
The issue of this great contingency,
So interesting from its mystery,
Of eager curiosity the whet,
To all, and, in its consequence, to me.
'Twas since the rumour spread so currently
That I had disappeared.[76]

---

[72] The marriage was celebrated on 29th July 1565, and James was born on 19th June 1566.
[73] Protestation by Huntly and Argyl. Tytl. p. 284.
[74] Rob. B. 4. 1566. [75] Tytl. p. 155.
[76] Rob. Aug. 8. 1566. App. No. 17.

L. Reres. Was 't since?
Mary. It was.
You know the range of western hills, from hence
Which runs toward the south. There, I had heard
That underneath the farthest off, in ken
Scarce from the Castle visible, where ends
The vale of Lothian, and of Pictland, clear
Through which the Esk descends, apparently,
That in the open distance terminates
Above, on this side, in a pastoral dean
That skirts its base, there lived an aged hag,
In dreary studious solitude; deep read,
As 't was affirmed, in marks, and lines, and dreams,
And spells, by which to drag reluctantly
From Saturn's gloomy cave a premature
And short display of persons and events,
As yet, unfit to bear the cheerful light.
L. Reres. I had forgot; the carline Neps, I guess.
Mary. The same. As I am told, as thick as spots
On leopard, branded o'er, and fast secured,
With bonds infernal of allegiance black.
L. Reres. And that with the, as currently believed,
Good neighbour of St Andrews o'er the frith,
Fell carline, cursed Nicknavin,[77] and old Nick,
She holds her sabbaths at North Berwick Kirk,[78]
Midway between; whilst oft, at other times,
With other friends, less noted and more near,
In shape of purring cat, or hare, or toad,
Or crawling reptile else, or moping owl,
At midnight deep, she meets, to generate
Foul mischief, when their hootings ominous
Are heard, from out the dreary solitude,
And dark recess, or from the storm descend,
In strange, confused, and interchanging sounds.
Mary. Until the clock had told the night was past,
I sound had slept. I then awoke disturbed:
And on again my sinking down to rest;
By impulse driven I was too weak to stem,
And flying from the tortures I endured,
To seek relief from aught my doubts would cure,

---

[77] Crawf. 1569. p. 112. [78] Melv. pp. 194, 195.

On which they bore away the royal corpse![83]

L. Reres. And thus let him be offered up, since fate
Ordains, a splendid sacrifice to love
Obstructed. When 't is done, 't is o'er. Its wish
Will then be crowned; and all be satisfied.

Mary. Yes, "satisfied;" when justice is fulfilled,
Retributive and sure; atonement made;
And, though itself but suffering for its guilt,
When all the debt is paid; the sea of blood
Required is shed, the vengeful shade to glut,
And peaceful lay: for I have still in store
Events to feed thy wonder with, enough
To raise and terrify th' unfeeling dead!

L. Reres. The destinies forbid! But, though by chance,
As yet, in part, it has predicted true,
Concurring accident may not befriend,
Again, what it foretold. Your Majesty
To superstitions such gives overweight;
Is, with submission, somewhat credulous:
'T would scarce be trusted by Buchanan's self,
Who is so easily imposed upon.[84]
Your Grace forgets, 't is but a *dream!*

Mary. I hope
It will be so; though, from the past, things seem
To augur ill. But when the rest are heard,
Of the examples expiatory, then,
Its truth or falsehood, time ere long will try,
Experience teaching test, that seldom fails.
As far as records reach, in reverence
Oracular have dreams been ever held;[85]
With magic, divination, sorcery,
And witchcraft too, believed; upon the faith
Of Scripture's self, with it to stand, or fall.—
As if a silent moon had now elapsed,
Had waxed and waned, and through her quarters run,
And I, repelled with horror, had resumed
My dumb attention, when, from out the shade,
Now looking north, and, hence, upon my right,
As from the left before, a twilight gray
Began to brighten up. Just as the lamp

---

[83] Rob. 9 and 10. Feb. 1567. [84] Melv. p. 125.
[85] Grotius on the Truth of the Christian Religion, with Le Clerc's notes, B. 1. sect. 17.

Of health, of innocence, of competence,
And happiness. The gratitude so placed,
And confidence in God alone; in Him,
So justly and so wisely placed; I felt,
As a reflective censure deep. I felt
My own ingratitude and folly; blessed
So far beyond, so far above the swain,
With gifts and destinies, so thanklessly
Returned by the disloyal errand, full
Of diffidence, I then was going on.
My conscience smote, but stopped me not; so bent
I was, it turned me not; I travelled still;
With haste, spurred blindly forward to my aim;
Of all regardless, but to gratify
My rash and baneful curiosity;
Like Eve, be what it would the consequence,
Of flying in the face of heaven by search,
From bad inferior mortal instruments,
By stealth, into the book divine of fate,
Insulting it, defying secrecy.
When I had now advanced some lonely miles,
To these all-soothing notes, succeeded from the left,
And from the mossy moors and bents, with night,
The chuckings hoarse of wandering grouse; thus led,
The eye no longer able, by the ear
To find each other in the dark, amidst
The heath, so like in colour to themselves.
As when awake I 'd seen the Pentland Hills
In passing to Dumfries, I thought beneath
Their changing summits, round, and conic, green,
And brown, as grass or heath prevailed, I rode
Along their varied skirts, descending now
Into a bashful dell, or rising o'er
A forward brow, with sykes, and braes, and bents,
And mossy moors, extending wide beyond,
Upon the left, till I had gained, some ten
Miles hence, a bold ascent, along the foot
Of which, at giddy distance, ran the Esk,
That, crossing from the parted hills, the right
Upon, through pointed rocks, by contrast wild,
In hollow murmurs, struck into the still,
And silent air a fresh solemnity.

A while, ere I could venture down to take
The ford, with awe-struck horror shrunk, I paused
Involuntarily. Enough of things
Were eyed, and heard, as to the roused and hot
Imagination, ushered into play,
Could leave to each impression widest range.
All round was seen, yet but by halves, and through
Gigantic indistinctness. From the Esk
Beneath, at distance deep, a sparkle stole
Up, through some trees, from the reflected moon,
Upon the left, at times, amidst the gloom,
Disturbing its repose; and on the right,
Behind the hills, of an unvaried tint,
A sable curtain, by discordance, stamped
More strong the general effect. Beyond
The burn, a solitary pass the dean
Led to, its termination marked by two
Diverging rocks of conic shape. Ascends
From that upon the right a verdant hill;
And o'er the other's base I could discern,
Upon its farther southern side, a light
And puny breath of smoke aspiring slow,
Like flaky pillar, to the pale-faced orb
Of night above, from out the dreary Hut.[79]

L. Reres. The place, as fame reports, is strange indeed:
Around the Sybil's Cave, in Italy,
There cannot be more objects suitable.
Here, on the channel of our rapid Esk,
O'er mid ascent, there oozes from the hill
Upon the south, a spring, that by its powers
Astonishing, like the fell gorgon head,
Converts each substance found within its reach
To callous stone: And from the conic rocks
As porpesse foul, or famous dolphin swift
Before a hurricane, or some event
Of fearful consequence, in playful mood,
Neps has been seen by the affrighted clown
Upon her broom, to gambol, bound, and leap
Across the pass at nights, from point to point,

---

[79] Scenery edition of the Gentle Shepherd, with Views and Descriptions, *Mause's Cottage, &c.*—Dr Pennecuik's Works, with Notes, *Of the North Esk.*

Mary. The castle wall I thought was battered down,
My brother with a smile commanding it;[97]
And, as it fell to ruin, left a beam,
On which, in halters, hung a string of dead,
Divided into four; and five; and one;[98]
As they had suffered execution marked.
I 'd of the five, about the eminence,
Our Paris seen; but of the leading four,
Though Blackadder, who freighted with myself
The Earl, that morn', to Alloa, was one,[99]
I was in doubt, and could not be resolved.
With the decaying beam the bodies dropt.
Then, from the north, a dying shriek I heard,
That wildly ushered to the winds a shade,
Bereft of reason, hastening to the place,
With frantic speed, from fetters and a jail,[100]
A guilty conscience, loathsome poverty,
And foul disease I weened; its bonnet loose
On matted hair, its sleeves unbuttoned, hose
Ungartered, shoes untied.[101] Till it arrived
I knew it not, through the poor tattered shreds
Of a Norwegian dress;[102] when starting back,
With sad regret, then, with a look of woe,
Inclining o'er the wreck, it dropt a tear,
And melted in the air. So sure, and soon,
Good God! does judgment follow up the crime.

L. Reres. The Earl, imprisoned, to expire at last
Delirious in Denmark! 'Tis absurd.

Mary. No sovereign gilding sun, nor mellowing [moon,
Nor meteor bright remained, the whole t' illume:
All pictured, feeble, broken, and disturbed,
Without effect, while four unequal lamps,
That in succession kindled up, impressed
A partial glare. Now, as an aged tower,
That propt the last of the directing lights,
Fell down, through failure of a buttress strong
That it supported on the south, it showed
A frame of wood, and instrument that looked

---

[97] Crawf. p. 48. 1567. [98] Rob. B. 5. 1568.
[99] Buch. L. 18.—Rob. B. 5. 1567. [100] Melv. p. 85.
[101] Shaksp. *As you like it.* [102] Rob. B. 5. 1567.

A substitute for the imperfect axe;
While under it upon a scaffold seemed
Exposed and stiff stretched out a headless trunk,
In form and dress our present Chancellor,[103]
On whom the maiden instrument had first
Been tried, that held a model of the same
Hung round with empty crowns, and coronets,
Cockades, and caps, and gowns, and fleurs-de lis,
In this, and in the other hand, new built,
That of a castle, but without its roof.[104]
Upon the platform's upper end there stood
My brother's figure, from its marks, long since
As murdered prematurely by a shot;[105]
For near I saw, thrown down by some revenged,
Escaped assassin, a discharged fusee,
Which ruthless time had reddened o'er with rust:
One palm essayed to stop a wound below
His breast, as t' other hid his face, or wiped
Away the trickling blood: and, at his feet,
The Earl of Morton's, the high Chancellor's,
As if before his execution driven
To this through his success, though now his friend,
Of later date, transfixed by his own sword,[106]
My subtle Secretary Maitland lay;
His face directed to our gallant Grange
Suspended o'er him from a gibbet's arm,
On which his brother also lifeless hung.
Before these vanished, and the whole, alike,
Obeyed the calls of time, and wasted down,
Afar, in badge and crest like Westmoreland,[107]
By others of less note accompanied,
From off the south, a leader fled toward
The east, as following fast ascended out
Of sight, of Norfolk[108] and Northumberland,[109]
The headless forms, as sufferers, it seemed,

---

[103] Melv. p. 128.—Rob. B. 6, 1581.—Tytl. B. 2, c. 6. 2d June 1581.

[104] Dr Pennecuik's Works, with notes, *Of the Lyne, Drochil Castle.* [105] Rob. B. 5, 1568, 1570.

[106] Rob. B. 6, 3. Aug. 1573. [107] Rob. B. 5, 1569.—Hume, 1569.

[108] Melv. pp. 96, 97, 98, 99.—Hume, 2. June 1572.

[109] Hume 1572.—Rob. B. 5, 1569.

Before the Chancellor; in time, between
My brother, and the Secretary sly,
With faithful, fearless, patriotic Grange,
To foes a lion, and to friends a lamb.[110]

L. Reres. Incredible! Her trusted supports here!
The noblest subjects too of England's queen!
'Tis all a cheat; illusion; crafty charm!
A scene but to the mind's eye visible!
Th' effects of glamour, to create belief,
By means of borrowed spectres used in sleep!
A shade-like show of passing puppets, vain,
As of a nursery tale the horrors raised,
Which, some years hence, Buchanan may repeat
~~For truth, because he credits it himself,~~[111]
To Rothsay's Duke, when he is old enough
For stories such; to the deceits practised
By witches erst on credulous Macbeth
Appendix apposite.

Mary. 'Tis possible:
Though something like a friendly spirit warns;
My genius good, in secret whispers, pleads;
In spite of me, to credit give. If true;
If guilt 's to be; it still is yet uncleared.
Direct, or implicated even, while one
Of all, though by unfair construction charged,
Is left, the troubled spirit cannot rest.
Blood will have blood.

L. Reres. Yet more?—Be gracious, Heaven!

Mary. In wild confusion, in the distance seen,
A waste, of noble rank, as from the south,
Escaped, some fled to various points; while stalked
A Sprite across, from execution straight.[112]
A swarm of exiles, now, in every part
Appeared in agitation; when a Youth
Of airy form, as from a gibbet dropt,[113]
Led on a crowd of strangled motley ghosts,
With priests among; before—shall I, good God!

---

[110] Melv. pp. 122. 123.—William Kirkaldy of Grange, interred in the "ancient burial-place of his predecessors in Kinghorn."
[111] Melv. p. 125. [112] Hume, 1584, Francis Throcmorton.
[113] Hume, Sep. 1586, Anthony Babington.

Relate !—I issued forth *myself!*—Even *I*
By lettered, figured label shown a-top,
On this same month ! Almost, on this same day !—
My very self! with beads and crucifix,
In black attire, just headless from the block !!!—[114]
Preceded by her executioner,
Elizabeth me followed close ; her train
Upheld by Murray and our Chancellor ;
The phantoms of her tools and victims, both ;
For treachery and blood retributive,
Though brought by her to their untimely ends ;
From broils, of course, by her and Cecil bred,
And fed, that she may be their arbitress,
Divide, and govern, Scotland from her queen,
The obstacle to her and Cecil's views.
Exulting o'er me, as I thought, with smile
Malign, she pointed to the triple crown,
Above the diadems of France and Spain,
She 'd crushed, and broken crosier lying near ;
For all the southern shades were of, I saw,
Our holy catholic faith. Her speaking eyes
Directed to the spirit, tall and pale,
And youthful, though dejected, of the King ;
Retiring slow ; at length, now pacified.

L. Reres. Were you within her power, it could not be !
With all her envy ; and her masculine,
Presumptuous pride, to push her on.

Mary. But, mark
The short-lived victory : the fruitful ground
Of all my hopes : my comfort yet, amidst
Th' o'erwhelming multitude of griefs, and foes.—
To my surprise ; ere she withdrew, the sun
Began to rise ; and, as he brightened up,
Descending from the north, a chair of state
Appeared, in which there sat a Personage,
The same in features as my Son, improved
To full maturity of manhood's strength.
High, o'er his head, restored again to form,
In air, though vapour like, I lightly hung ;
Triumphant, gilt by the pervading beam :
As, in her turn, now humbled and chagrined,

---

[114] Melv. pp. 172, 173.—Hume, 8. Feb. 1587.

My spiteful Rival glid away.[115] The Rose
And Thistle joined, I held; and o'er the chair
Suspended both the Crowns, within a ring
Of glorious light. As time advanced, the blaze
More brilliant grew: till, from the UNION blest,
So keen at length it glowed, that, from excess
Of shine, as in a furnace melted down,
The figures disappeared; and to the state
In which it was, when first it ebbed within
The cabalistic marks, the whole returned.
As the mysterious round began to lose
Its virtue, with th' expiring spell dispelled
That fettered it, o'erflowing soon, like flood
Pent up, as broke the charm, it broke its bounds,
Dilating wide, and spread about the wall,
The skreen, divested now of use, removed,
Replacing into view the powerful Witch
With all her drugs, and implements of art,
As when I entered to the frightful Hut.—
No longer chained by the concern I felt,
Fast rivetted, to scenes of interest
So deep and monitory; from the charm
Awaking soon, in trouble I arose.—
With terror filled, resolved at once to learn
To profit by its counsel, and to mar
This dreadful dream; discard the Earl; recal
My conjugal esteem; prevent the shame
Of his intended flight; and gain anew
Upon th' uxorious temper of the King;
I hastened to the west to comfort him—.[116]
'Tis said that "conduct," Reres, "is fate." It must
Be owned, in part, this observation holds
Invariably, and oft is wholly true.
But, what is conduct? Is it not itself,
With all its powers as a productive cause,
A mere effect; the certain consequence
Of what occasions it, and gives its birth
Existence, in the usual course of things,

---

[115] Hume.—Elizabeth died, 24. March 1603.
[116] Rob. Dissert.—Left Edinburgh the 21st, and arrived at Glasgow 23d Jan. 1567.

By nature's laws their order to preserve
In harmony and method undisturbed,
Impelling to obedience; yet, it seems,
From sympathy, connexion with ourselves
By dispositions constitutional,
So grateful to our feelings, vanity,
Though thus accountable, and pride, appears,
From its original, so much our own,
'T is thought it flows from liberty and choice:
As if we could the destinies direct,
The dispensations fore-ordained perplex,
Necessity divert, and miracles
Create, by loosening the connecting ties,
And giving causes their effects at will,
Without a special holy gift from heaven.
If conduct fortune leads, it follows fate,
By which 't is bound to its producer first
Indissolubly, ere it acts itself,
Within its cycle circumscribed,
Its own assistant and consistent part
In the progressive round of being, till
Confusion shall commence, life's motions cease,
The awful quiet of universal death,
And chaos black and horrible return.
Of such ascendency I 'm satisfied,
By sad experience irresistible.
I felt the influence of my planet then,
The star that shone malignant on my birth,
A ruling power presided over me,
That disconcerted all my purposes;
For, as thou knowest, my sole companion there,
At Glasgow, in the lodgings of the King,
I scarce had slept beneath his roof a night,
Before th' impressions lost their force so much,
And my worst apprehensions were so far
Forgot, subsided, and subdued, that when
Withdrawn to you at times from Lennox-house
At hand, to the apartments by his Grace
Of Glasgow, ere he went to France possessed,[117]
I wrote from thence fresh proofs of confidence

[117] Whit. v. 2. p. 2. 272.

Implicit as before; this giddy trust
Unguardedly bestowed; empowered the Earl,
By dire decree, the very place to pitch
Upon for him I had been warned against,
Nay, at this moment, I am so bewitched
By the resistless power directing blind
Fatality,[118] that, though my former hate
Has much diminished, were I certain made
Of such a bold intent, I would, I dread,
Have scarce the courage to avert the blow.[119]

L. Reres. Then, let it strike! and that whene'er it [will!
Even by the dream in which your Grace confides,
'T is not pretended to be struck by *you*.
And if it was, would you be culpable,
When so provoked, and done to save yourself;
To save torn Scotland's ruin and disgrace,
From ills even worse than all you 've yet endured?
Was to retaliate ever held a crime?
If to your meanest subject 't is allowed
To kill in self defence, would such a plea
Be to your Majesty, as wrong, refused?
Let David's death, then, work its own revenge.
For, sure, the horrors that were after shown;
Shown, after the Lord Darnly's pictured fall,
As judgments consequent on previous guilt,
So suited to deter; deter from what?
From paying off a debt; from a mere act
Retributive, unblameable, incurred
By the aggressive malefactor's self;
Were false alarms, hung out by mischief's tools,
To fright your Grace from future happiness.
Besides, 't is but in character. 'T were strange
To warn from what is wished; from misery;
In which such fiends delight. Although in part
The pictured prophecy has come to pass,
'T is but a hackneyed trick to gain belief;
Secure you confidence, and draw you off.— your
But, Bothwell's self appears. I hope he 'll drive
All groundless scruples from your Majesty.

---

[118] Rob. B. 5. 1567. [119] Buch. L. 18.—Rob. Dissert. p. 17.

BOTHWELL.

[Reres,

Both. As none, I learnt, were with your Grace, but
I have thus boldly ventured to intrude;
Presuming on the note by Paris sent,
To beg this private audience.

Mary. Ye saints! [Reres
How shall I stand this interview! *(Aside.)*—Then,
You may withdraw. You will attend the Masque;
Where, if I call you not between, we meet.
Be not from home to-night, till then. Farewell.

L. Reres. (Aside to Bothwell.)
Much may be done ere then, though I remain
At home. Yet I suspect 't will not be done
Till then——

Both. No more! by all the pledges got
Of former loves!—*(Aloud.)* My trusty friend, adieu.
(Exit L. Reres.—
May I presume to ask your Majesty,
Why you are so disturbed? your servant used
Not thus to be received! you were not more
Concerned at the Craigmillar conference.

Mary. O, name it not! Had it been blotted, razed,
From the events of fortune's calendar,
At my nativity, when my sad lot
Was cast, and, from my recollections, since,
Effaced!

Both. By heavens! I sooner would resign
The sum of all the happiest events,
Were e'er showered down upon me, than the hopes
To which that lucky conference gave birth!
Your coolness, heightened to disgust, provoked
By the affront of Rizzio's shocking death,
With all your gracious partiality,
Had scarcely made me venture else to aim
At such a pitch of bliss. With what delight,
As proof of loyal confidence, I bore
You up the firth, with both the Blackadders
In aid, resigned to my protection safe,
That morn, I then but feebly durst express
At humble distance, by attentions kind:
Or how, even after I rejoiced beneath

The robber Elliot's wound, when it disclosed
At Hermitage, where I disabled lay,
To my transported soul, that I possessed
So much of your regard, as to obtain
A visit from your Grace; my Queen herself!
Though holding then her justice airs, or courts
Itinerant, to keep the laws in force;[120]
At Jedburgh, too, so far, and difficult
Between, by roads almost unpassable.[121]

Mary. Recal not now these slips; these foolish scenes;
So hasty, thoughtless, inconsiderate;
To my remembrance.

Both. Yet, deny me not.
But, with what extacy did I since then
Acquire, from my angelic sovereign sent,
The very Casket she had formerly
Received, as the first proof of royal love![122]
And in its shining case, enraptured, store
Those billets, only worthy of its care,
Till I had crowned the whole with promise high,
Of even the hand itself from whence they flowed![123]

Mary. Distrust attend the serpent's poisonous tongue,
So bland, persuasive, and pestiferous,
Determined you to entertain a thought
Beyond respect; to profit by my woes,
And seize the vacant centre of my heart!
A curse, as deep as Eve's, I could pronounce
On eloquence. May conscience blight its words,
When misapplied! It took me unawares;
As from a friend; when but another's tool.
'T was weakness all. A thoughtless, lawless freak,
I now repent me of, as of the wild
Affection which I felt before, that, seen,
Was taken advantage of by Lethington.

Both. If 't is a lawless passion, why divorce
Him not, and wed by law; reward the claims
Of love and loyalty?

Mary. It might be used,

---

[120] Melv. p. 90.
[121] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[122] Rob. B. 5. 1567, 1568.
[123] Tytl. p. 3.

Perhaps, as I observed, against my Son;
To crush my triumph, and defeat my hopes.
Both. The aid of Murray, Maitland, and Reform,
Is ours: to make you quit of him, they all
Declared, with safety to the Prince. Indeed,
Lord James once sought his life; and though restored,
In consequence of failure previously
In the advances he had vilely tried,[124]
By David's death, has been the secret mean
Of leading to revenge. I hither came
From Maitland, even but now, t' acquaint your Grace
That Mortoune's self, the most subservient tool
Of England's views,[125] would scarcely hesitate
To realize the hint his friends threw out,
And take redress for Darnly's treachery
On Rizew's slaughter, if secured against
Your Majesty's displeasure, then, so late
Incurred. A Warrant of forgiveness would
At once, I know, all difficulties end;
And on himself throw back his perfidy.
Mary. To Mortoune! Rixio's; David's; murderer!
Who Douglas sent, his relative, to snatch
The king's own steel with which to stab, and leave
Infixed, for Darnly, Mortoune, and himself;
Himself, but Mortoune's tool, to dupe the king![126]
Then, let him live, and be my husband still.
Before I 'd grant a warrant for his death,
I 'd almost sooner lose my Son himself.
Both. Whence comes this change? this unexpected [wish?
And is it possible your Grace should, thus,
Again submit, ere long, to his abuse?
Can your exalted mind brook this from *him*?
From one who owes that very power to you,
He turns so brutally against you now:
Nay life itself; when by your brother sought!
To what strange quarter since has fled the soul;
The lofty spirit used to guard my Queen?

---

[124] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[125] Melv. pp. 110, 113, 115, 116, 118, 123.
[126] Melv. pp. 63, 64, 65, 66.

To have such worth; its value to despise;
Not listen to its calls upon yourself;
Is, I had almost said, a crime. You used
Not formerly to be so tame.

Mary. Then look
On all I 've said and writ before as nought;
Mere flashes of the moment; fleeting, like
Th' eventual heat of passion; or the vague
Contingency that gave it birth. You know
How much I loved him once. Consider; think;
He 's still the father of my darling hopes,
My infant Son?

Both. Ye Gods! What tenderness
Is cast away; upon an object such!
So sunk below your royal care! With each
Defect and want that can deform the mind;
And foul with putrid malady without.
For but a few years more of misery,
That, of itself, ere long must terminate,
Can it be virtue to preserve a mere
Existence, fraught with national distress,
And each domestic ill? Without one power
Of understanding to command, the aid
Of friendship, to support respect, or bright
Accomplishment, to hide his numerous faults.

Mary. Though as you say; yet still I 'll bear it on.
His judgment hence may rise, his passions sink,
His principles improve: he 's yet but young.

Both. Where lies the hopeless chance of such a change?
Is he, without capacity to mend,
Not proud, capricious, cross, vindictive, false,
Ungrateful, foolish, obstinate, and weak;[127]
Incontinent?

Mary. "Incontinent!"—Untrue.[128]

Both. His sores look at?—inconstant as the wind,
A drunkard, and addicted to each low
Pursuit, and grovelling and gross desire,
Can draw contempt on him, and heap disgrace
And misery on the kingdom, and yourself?
Did he not Ruthven fiercely try to stab,

---

[127] Rob. B. 3, 1565. B. 4, 1566.

[128] Rob. B. 4, 1567.

For only bringing tidings he disliked;
That you had thought it prudent to delay
Creating him the Duke of Albany;
Delay, and but *to soothe Elizabeth?*[129]
Did he not seek t' assassinate the Earl
Your brother, though he, and his father, came,
From England here with his consent, the source
Of his success?[130] Did he not meanly court,
When come, the help of Rixio, to advance,
By his address, his favour with your Grace,[131]
And after murder him? And did he not,
As if to banish confidence at once,
And crown his treachery consummately
With breach of truth and honour, all disown;[132]
Desert and persecute the men he 'd led
Himself to its accomplishment?
Mary. With grief;
The ruffians were led on; let in by him;
That they had his authority to act,
I own; and feel the wounds I wish to heal.
Both. Had he not authorised this mode himself,
Who is there to regret, or blame, much less
Revenge his taking off? Abandoned by
His former Queen Elizabeth; her friends
The triple head of the Reform, and their
Satellites here, intriguing Randolph, rude
Haranguing Knox, true calvinist austere,
And learned libelling Buchanan harsh.[133]
Mary. The barbarous demagogue;[134] and pedagogue!
The sacrilegious treasonable trumps,
Republican seditious savages,
Masked candidates for influence,
Pre-eminence, and power, beneath the black
Grave unassuming garb of holiness,
Pure godly reformation's specious plea,
And heresies held out to hide their views!
That preaching blasphemy; this teaching treason.
To be estranged from such is to be wished;

---

[129] Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[130] Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[131] Melv. pp. 56, 57.—Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1564, p. 189.—Rob. B. 3, 1565.
[132] Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[133] Melv. p. 125.
[134] Hume, Eliz. c. 1, 1561.

Apostates, traitors to their creed, and me.
From such, what aid could he or I expect?
Both. Neglected by their rivals with your Grace;
Abhorred by the supplanted Hamiltons;[135]
As if ashamed of him, who is there, save,
Disgraced, his father, exiled to the west,[136]
As weak and friendless as himself,[137] but would
Applaud the deed with one assent?[138]
Mary. True!—true!—
His enemies at least; while such myself,
As oft I thought I should have done; nay, vexed,
Even ventured to insinuate, misled,
Or by disgusts from him, or loves from you. [now?
Both. And whence is 't these disgusts are lessened
Tall, straight, yet slim, and smooth, and lady-faced,[139]
Without a beard, to hide his blasted bloom,
Is 't with the black and putrid pustules strange,
That late, his nauseous carcase over-ran;
O'er 't all so deep their sceptic influence sent,
As to affect the source and spring of life,
Corrupt and taint, beyond approach, his breath,[140]
Repulsive, as his person, to the eye?
Mary. Then he 's atoned enough. He 's in a state
Of convalescence; henceforth, let him mend,
And live, and blunder till he sacrifice
Himself.
Both. Whence is 't my loves are not received,
And favoured as before? Then, will you, raised
To cheering hope by your encouragement,
When all my prospects seemed to be approved,
Withdraw them now; and leave me to despair?
Was this the language of the sonnets sent;
The fond transporting letters I received,
From Glasgow once, in confidence, their slip
Enclosing this invaluable pledge.—[141]
(Unlocking, and taking off a bracelet from his wrist.)

---

[135] Melv. pp. 42, 56. [136] Rob. B. 4, 1567.
[137] Rob. B. 3, 1565, B. 4, March 19, 1567.—Hume, Eliz. c. 2, 1567. [138] Rob. B. 4, 1566. [139] Melv. pp. 48, 56.
[140] Queen Mary's 1st letter to Bothwell. [141] Whit. v. 2, p. 159.

By this inestimable charm! *(Kneeling on one knee)* this
Of love I wear! I will not rise; stir hence; [badge
Desist; till you have yielded your consent!

Mary. And can you turn a generous gift, bestowed
From thoughtless impulse, thus to bring me shame?

Both. Of all that could, around, in Scotland's realm
With safety give relief, is there a man
Whose wisdom would give sanction to the deed,
So fit from rank, next to yourself, from power
And favour with, thus certain to secure,
Elizabeth, as the high Chancellor;
To hinder censure, and to ward it off,
Even were such measures strange, or infamous?[142]
And is there one could ask it with a grace
So good, from former services, as I?
Was 't not your mother's enemies that drove
Me first from hence, in happy hour, to you
In France; where I remained till your return,[143]
When all its gallant youths attended you,
Preceded by the princes of Lorrain,
With royal pomp, delightful spectacle!
Intent who foremost should escort their Queen
From Paris to the sea; your gorgeous train,
While passing o'er the plains of Picardy,
Like airy comet's in its brilliant course,
Illuming and enlivening wondering crowds?[144]—
Have I not since adhered with uniform
Fidelity, 'midst all the shiftings round,
And factious troubles of the reelling state?— reeling
And have not I, so late as Rizew's death,
Then, also apprehensive of my life,[145]
Restored your Grace to liberty and power?[146]—
If merited disgust; return of love;
Regard for Scotland; and yourself; will not;
Let gratitude prevail?

Mary. As justice claims,
When gratitude is due. When all my gifts

---

[142] Rob. B. 4. 1566.—Hume, Eliz c. 2, 1565.
[143] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[144] *Mary, Queen of Scots;* a tragedy, by the Honourable John St John.
[145] Melv. p. 64.
[146] Rob. B. 4. 1566. Append. to v. 1, No. 15.

So high, of honours and emoluments,
Shall be revoked; shall be forgot—
Both. By *me;*
Although submissively my humble aids
I 've thus presumed to recollect; by *me;*
At least, while I have mind or memory;
Then never, never shall this be; I swear!
By her I swear, by whom they were bestowed!
Bestowed on *me.* Let mine become extinct
As by a spell; a charm, from one of those,
So numberless and irresistible,
Your majesty has ever at command,
Your fascinating guards and ornaments;
As duties be erased: as bounties, yours
Indelible remain. Ere them forget,
I 'd from my ruddy Castle's topmost tower,
Upon its threatening brow, o'erhanging Clyde,
That fills and sweeps the wooded pass between,
And Blantyre's Craig, and Priory, down throw
Myself, to perish in the shrouded stream,
'Twixt power, and piety!
Mary. And leave your "Bank
"Of Bothwell, blooming fair."[147]—But, grant the force,
As I permit you to appreciate them,
Of your fidelity and services;
Yet strength must bend to stronger ties.
Both. Whate'er
Your obligations once, they 're now no more.
What claims can he retain, of love, or care,
For violated faith, and gross abuse?
Mary. Though reason yield, yet nature must command.
Both. Let nature then command; and love direct.
Mary. Then press me not, while nature bids him live.
Both. But, is not reason nature's gift? The high
Prerogative of man; bestowed, to prune
And counteract the faults of nature's self?
To let a criminal survive; against

---

[147] *Bothwell Bank,* an old song. Stat. Hist. par. of Bothwell. "The Earl of Hertford had retreated after the battle," of Bannockburn, "to the castle of Bothwell. He was besieged there by Edward "Bruce, and soon capitulated." Sir D. Dalr. Ann. A. D. 1314. *Robert* I.

The state, and sufferer, were equally
Itself a crime that nature reprobates.
Mary. Assail me not. Though he 'd remain to live
My daily cross, I 'll patiently submit.
Both. (Rising.) Then, let him fly!—
Mary. Fly!—Grant me strength![148]
Both. Yes; fly!—
Hence, fly!—to the rich continent!—to *France*![149]
Where oft I 've seen you with such splendour shine
At tilts and tournaments, and sports and feasts;
Such lustre as to dim each object round!
And there, where still most delicate your heart
Remains, 'mongst all your friends; relations; proud
Exulting, envious rivals, for the palm
Of beauty, and of fame; helped by his rank,
And showy figure, and appearances;
Let him, since this alternative you choose,
Rehearse a tale of cruelty and woe,
That never will, nor can be done away!
Mary. Then, rather let—
Both. Transporting words! *(Kneeling.)*
Mary. No—Yes—
Yes—rather let him mend! survive! and—fly!—
Though he should brand me o'er with infamy;
Cut off my dearest friends—and only leave—
Reproach!—Each charge but *this* I could have borne
With ease. *(Aside)*—Do let me now withdraw?
Both. Yet stay!—
I 've other pleas, more powerful far, to urge. [no more!—
Mary. (Going.) You have my favour still.—Till free,
Let both our nuptial bonds in peace remain.
(Disengages herself, and Exit.)
Both. (Rising.) "You have my favour still.—Till free,
With it, when free, of course, the royal hand [no more!"—
Will soon be mine.—The Prince's person next.[150]—
And then, in consequence, the full reward
Of all my hopes, and services, and crimes;
The splendid Diadem!—But Douglas comes
With Lethington.

---

[148] Rob. B. 4. 1567. [149] Rob. B. 4. 1566.
[150] Melv. pp. 78, 80, 81.—Rob B. 4. 1567.

Secretary MAITLAND, *and* ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS.

How, Douglas, now inclines
The Earl, your friend?——I hope you have prevailed.
Doug. No farther, than myself to liberate
From fear of his displeasure.—Otherwise
He still remains as formerly.
Both. Then "shew
The Earl"—"the Queen will hear no speech, of that
Appointed unto me?"[151]
Leth. So all must rest
Upon the future match.—Indeed I scarce
Regret she 's not involved. *(Aside.)*
Doug. But, may I crave
My Lord, "I may be made more sensible
Of what is meant?"
Leth. The Earl will understand
Sufficiently. The chancellor will ask
No more of you.
Both. This done, you will not fail
To come my chamber to at one, prepared.—
Meanwhile, collect for me the spies' reports.
(Aside to Douglas as he goes.)
Leth. Yet will not this disturb your plan; my Lord.
You 've many friends and strong. You Huntly have;
My cousin Seaton, likewise, 'mongst the rest;
If I am not deceived; with numbers more:
And though the loss of Mortoune, and the Queen,
Be unexpected; yet, so soon as done,
'Tis o'er, you have his promised aid to gain
Her Grace.
Both. Of that I am aware; and act
In confidence.
Leth. My presence now, my Lord,
Might therefore chance to interfere with things
Of more concern.—I must, besides, attend
Upon the Earl of Athol, who designs
To sup with me, to-night, before the Masque.

---

[151] Rob. v. 2, Append. No. 12, *Arch. Douglas's Letter to the Queen of Scots.*

You know 'tis not till twelve. Till Sunday 's o'er.
(Exit Lethington.)

Both. " I'll now, with Huntly, Cassilis, and Argyl,[152]
Pass up;" who wait, t' accompany her Grace;[153]
As if, with them, to soothe this stumbling block:
Feign some excuse; and while they trifle, thence
Withdraw, to hear what tidings from the spies
I 've scattered through the streets, and round the ports;
To learn if other points are ordered right;
What train they 're in, beneath my instrument
Sir James, to bring this desperate plot to bear,
Must gain a Crown, or end in black despair![154] *(Exit.)*

---

[152] Melv. p. 77. [153] Buch. Detect.—Whit. v. 2. p. 432.
[154] Good. v. 2. pp. 77, 78, 81.—Whit. v. 3, pp. 240, 252.

ACT IV.

Young Henry, The Lord Darnly, King of Scots;
As unaware of danger, as of plots;
So tall and straight, so smooth and "lady-faced,"
With skin a gentle damsel might have graced,
With understanding as with body weak;
Still lodged confined in Kirk-a-field, and sick,
Receives a gracious visit from the Queen,
As if their loves estranged had never been.
At this o'erjoyed, he, ere he goes to rest,
Writes for his father's blessing from the west,
On all the prospects, from this interview,
Of future lasting happiness he drew.

SCENE—*The King's Principal Apartment, Kirk-a-Field.*

TAILZEOUR *and* MACKAIG; *Grooms of the Chamber; waiting for the* KING, *on each side of his couch.*

Mack. I know not, Tailzeour, whence it comes; but
Unwelcome, strange, forebodings fill my thoughts [some
To-night, and bid me fly from this; desert
The King, my master, in necessity,
Against the calls of conscience, gratitude,
And strict fidelity, and pity; leave
Him, by the world already almost left
Alone; and, coward-like, abandon him;
Though I can run no greater risk than he.
So strong the secret impulse, were it not
For shame, I 'd almost yield to its advice.
Dark hints and rumours, too, are floating round:
And it is certain his physician thinks
That poison caused his Majesty's disease.[1]
All nature troubled seems, somehow, since dark;
A darkness prematurely that came on:
Our day, yet short, thus shorter still it makes,
Prolonging opportunity for guilt.

---

[1] Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1566, p. 197.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.

A restless want of order fills the town,
As if some great event was on its eve;
And those of rank are stopt, they know not why,
As in a place besieged, till they explain.
Have you not heard the wonderful account,
From Fife, of one who, yesterday, at point
Of death, rose up in bed, and called aloud,
To help the King; for they were just about
To murder him! and, with a plaintive voice,
Exclaiming, in a little—" it were now
" In vain!—it will be done!"—himself expired?[2]

Tailz. I have; just now. If not to caution him;
It is surprising, how this story reached
The King so soon; before to-morrow's light!

Mack. Some wandering windward witch, upon her
When riding post, has to North Berwick brought [broom
It o'er the Forth from Fife, whence oft are seen
By fishers in the frith, and from the Bass,
Or passing or repassing on the sea
In shells, or in the air on sticks or straws,
As tides or winds invite, *good neighbours* such.

Tailz. She may; but, as they 're mischief's ministers,
I rather think the fact has ferried been
Immediately, to timeous warning give,
From Fife across the Forth, the common way.

Mack. It might be so; before the storm came on;
By some Kirkaldy, or Bruntisland boat:
Or yawl, with travellers, to Newhaven back.

Tailz. Or pinnace swift, to Leith, from Pettycur,
Or harbour of Kinghorn, propitiously,
With passengers, arrived, and all the news
Of yesterday.

Mack. 'T is possible; so fair
The wind and tide this morning for despatch;
Without assistance preternatural,
To press it to our port; or thence to this,
To put the King upon his guard in time.

Tailz. From magic books; from sciences occult;
A learned interpreter in visions, sights
Portentous, awful omens, unrevealed,

---

[2] Buch. L. 18.

As to their meanings, quite inexplicable
To common men, prognosticating dire
Events, such as, 't is said, was long ago
That famous travelled sighted seer of Fife,
The warlock of Balwearie, Michael Scot;
One read and seen in secrets, thus, could only tell
If we have cause to dread; but, whilst we slept
Last night, as usual, near his room, I dreamt,
That, rising from my bed, with you and Glen,
By previous orders from the King, I thought,
This morning we attended him to Leith;
To view, and spend some time on board a ship,
An old and crazy battered hulk, repaired
And fitted up by Bothwell and the Queen,
Who welcomed us, as Murray took himself
Away, across the firth. We then withdrew,
As if for our repose; when, at the dead
Of this approaching rest, the bark blew up!
And, with the shock, in terror I awoke!

Mack. Such like unquiet, alarming, sights had Glen.
On asking why he 'd seemed so much disturbed,
He told me that his Majesty himself
Had just appeared; and bid him not remain
Within this hateful house another night.[3]
And Nelson, too, imagined from his grave,
Deep buried under-ground, he was dug up,
And saw the King, undressed, and dead, at hand,
Outstretched, without a wound; as if asleep![4]

Tailz. What can these frightful circumstances mean?
Are they resolved to brave them out?

Mack. They are. [King,

Tailz. They 're right. 'T is wiser than to leave the
And run the chance, if but from heated brain,
Resulting from the horrors of the times;
Th' illusions of the fancy; or the fumes
Of indigestion; of sure ridicule,
And merited disgrace.

Mack. Besides; we run
No greater hazard than his Majesty
Himself, who fears them not.—But, see.—The King!

---

[3] Buch. Act. con. Mar. [4] Rob. Dissert.

HENRY, LORD DARNLY, *in his night-gown, and slippers, leaning on* GLEN *and* NELSON; *attended by* ABERNETHY, *his Physician.*

Darn. *(As entering)* As you observe—this storm will purify
The tainted air; and bring us health. The wise
Beneficence of heaven, what oft, at first,
We curses deem, to blessings turns. But, when
Will its effects come round to me? to let
Me quit this lonely house, and get abroad.
I ne'er before felt such a load o'erwhelm
My spirits. All my former pain; when racked;
When tortured; at the worst; was not, by half
So ill to bear, as this oppressive damp.
(Taking his seat; and GLEN *and* NELSON *retiring to a side.)*
Thanks both! I hope ere long to have the means,
Th' ability, to show my gratitude;
And, with more solid gifts than empty thanks,
Reward you all; in spite of these reports,
And frightful tales. But, when may I expect
To leave this miserable house? *(to Abernethy)* get free,
Beyond the ruins that, on every hand,
Block up its solitary walls, and mark
The downfall of our Holy Faith?[5] that I
May have this in my power: and show the change
My illness has produced.
Aber. The pustules now
Being gone, I hope your Majesty will soon
Be well, as formerly. Each night, I trust,
By means of strengthening sleep, a better day,
A happy prelude to the bracing bath,[6]
Will usher in. To-morrow; when, betimes,
I call; I 'll speak with greater certainty.
Darn. Then, let your visit be with the return

O

[5] Hume, Eliz. c. 1. 11th May 1559.—Rob. B. 3. 1565.
[6] Whitak. v. 3. p. 260.

Of light; for, oh! how I abhor this dull
Polluted place; and pant for liberty!
Aber. I shall attend your Majesty, with day;
At the first break of morn; before the sun
Shall show himself beyond the spreading Firth;
Before you enter to the powerful bath. [not
Darn. My kind physician, thanks. My props; let
For sleep 's then o'er in nights as yet so long,
Some other cause prevent your readiness
To wait upon this worthy friend, so soon
As he arrives, to-morrow, at the dawn;
When we shall, up, refreshed, each other meet.
Attends. By break of day, he 'll find us all prepared.
Darn. Now, you have leave to succour the distressed:
For from myself I 've learned to pity them.—
Nelson—be you his guide, and see him down.
Inspect the doors. and near my bed-room wait.[7]
For each precaution must be taken here.
Aber. For this indulgence thanks; both theirs and
Upon my king the healing balm of sleep [mine.
Produce its kindliest effects! that raised
I may your spirits find; and strength improved,
To-morrow; with the rising sun.
Darn. Amen!——
[*Exit Nelson, with Abernethy.*]
Amen!—How this emphatic word; this short
Oraison; clings to my dejected soul!—
And may it be a brilliant sun! His rays
May he, enlivening, pierce into my heart;
Rejoice 't; and, with the shade of night, dispel
This morbid, melancholy gloom! for, now;
Even when the pensive pale reflecting sphere
Contemplative, his substitute, appears
With silent silver shine, him following,
Serene, from the still bosom of the frith,
Her mirror; in mild majesty sedate;
The moon, and sun, with equal welcome pay,
Alternately, their visits, in this lone
Apartment; by disgusting spleen, and foul

---

7 Whit. v. 3, p. 241.

Disease, made nauseous within; and all
With impious ruins 'scutcheoned round, to warn
Me of the uncertainty of power!
Attends. Heaven grant
Your Majesty's desire!
Darn. Yet, why wish health?
Return of life? again to feel the pains
Of disrespectful solitude; without
Th' excuse of this disease, to pass it off.[8]
When driven by her insulting preference
Of Ricci, and indignities to me,
To shun her Majesty, and courtiers' slights;
To seek for shelter from the snow-clad hills
Of Peebles, barren and remote, amidst
Moss-troopers, mendicants, and gypsy-thieves;
Though frozen, fleeced, and starved, had not his Grace
Of Orkney, passing through it, furnished, then,
More provident than us, from his own stores,
What we required,[9] my body, yet, was sound;
But, save some faithful followers, like you,
That me attended with my hawks and hounds,
In brogues, and kilts, grey plaids, and jerkins light,
I was as destitute of company,
As now, I have this cloak to hide its cause;
And may be so again, should health return.
Without the sceptre, and the crown; the power
And dignity; a king in name, is like
A lion wanting strength; or eagle stript
Of talons, and of nerves, with beak obtuse,
With eye unmeet to face the sun, and soar
Aloft. Far happier lot a clown's, with each
Low attribute and honour he expects,
Than that of a neglected, slighted prince;
The phantom of unheeded royalty.[10]
Glen. Your Majesty may yet recover all,
And gain your first ascendant in the state.
Th' affections of the Queen seem now restored:
She and the lords were here, this very night.
Darn. They were indeed. But, what can we infer

---

[8] Melv. p. 67.
[9] Buch. L. 17.
[10] Rob. B. 4, 1566.

From transient calls of form? mere tasks imposed,
By the concerted rules of courtesy;
Of prudence, by the head, to hide the heart.
Has she e'er yet, though importuned so oft,
On me conferred the matrimonial crown?[11]
Have I e'er yet got aught, but of a king
The empty title destitute of power?
The name; that none but such might share her bed?
A boon bestowed mere dignity to please;
Her vanity; *herself*, to gratify.
While here with me, the Queen's affections seem
Restored, with greater warmth than even before:
But how can that be reconciled, if true,
With the displeasure shown at Melvil's gift?[12]
Is it a mark of love to cross, and thwart
The object of regard? to take offence
At what might tend to lessen his distress?—
'T was a poor trifle, thus, to take amiss!—
Bring me this spaniel now.—He will divert
Our gloom, by his address: and fawn, and cringe,
And frolic off the time, as well as e'er
A treacherous trimming dog, or puppy raw,
Or kindred minion of the venal court,
Before my honey-moon began to wane;
And be more faithful and affectionate.
Did not the wise Egyptians worship dogs;
And for their faith make internecine war?[13]
Is he, though a less finished work at first;
With faculties much less improveable;
Without the boasted power, beyond his life,
Yet still thus far possessed, of piloting,
With those before, his own acquirements round
The measured circle of society;
Not with the self-same policy endued?
Will either fawn on poverty and rags?
Will not disease, a blow, or frantic bite,
Annul, suspend, or render wild and mad,
Derange the qualities of either form;

---

[11] Rob. B. 3, 1565. B. 4. 1566.
[12] Rob. 3d Aug. 1566. Append. to v. 1. No. 17.
[13] Butler; Hudib. C. 1. p. 1.

Of that, as well as this: nay, make
Them bark, and foam, and tear, and water shun;
And, dying, act alike again? Does not
Infection sympathetic seize the mind,
Though far beyond the reach of matter deemed,
And instinct, if such name is just, as well
As frame, at times disposed for it, of man,
And dog? Did not affect the embryo soul
Of our young James, enwombed, even yet unborn,
His mother through, the slaughtered Rizew's stabs;
So that he cries and shudders at a sword
Unsheathed? And does not age impair the powers
Of both? even of a courtier's teasing tongue?—
Do, Glen, go find him out; and bring him here.
He 'll ease me of this sick philosophy.—[*Exit Glen.*
He 'll yet, I hope, for me the woodcocks spring,
From springs, up-wavering fast, on Leven's banks,
Or from the oaken coppices that fringe
Our Lennox' lovely lake, whence, bright, it flows;
That I may stop them, ere the sprays they clear,
And, disentangled, get into the air:
Or, sporting, skim along its shining sheet;
When shot, with all its fluttering, splashing, dead;
And bring the floating mallard to the shore.
I take delight in his engaging pranks.
When did you see him last?

Tail. I saw him not,
My Sire, since yesterday, at noon.

Mack. Nor I.

GLEN.

Glen. Some time ago, 't is said, the spaniel stole
Abroad; and made toward the palace, east:
Or his old master's, Melvil's house.

Darn. Ay; ay;
Right! To the palace; to the palace straight!
What brought the banquet's steam to this lone house?
Dunbar to this is counter quite. The wind
Has strangely veered about, of late; from west
To east! Most copiously, indeed! If long
Continued thus, it will, I dread, overwhelm
Us all!

Glen. May 't please your Majesty; the chance

Is equal, that he made for Melvil's house.
Darn. Well; still, he 's in the right. The Queen
Rejoice; now Melvil 's got him back again! [will sure
Her Grace's page, become her chamberlain,
Her privy councillor, ambassador!
A most convenient, courtly, protestant![14]
Glen. But, from his route, I rather think it must
Have been the palace drew him hence.
Darn. It must!
Although next morning, after Ricci's death,
His master scarce could manage to escape;[15]
Her chamberlain is there, as formerly.
She 'll have them both. He 's followed him to it.
So much she made of him when here, her art
Has gained him over with the crowd; allured
Him with the rest. His ear is musical:
He 'll, at her concerts, howl in symphony;
As Ricci did. 'T is like a spaniel's course
T' attend the fortunate; to seek to bask
Beneath the dazzling fruitful heat of rich
Meridian ray. A chilling dew awaits
The setting beam; it glimmers from the west;
It there expires; 't is but a sickly light;
It was not bright enough for him.—What!—Leave
Me not my very dog!—Deserted!—Gone!—
Even he! The creature I have fed! The heel
Of my own servant; my ambassador;
The spaniel of a spaniel to her Grace;
A simpering, prattling, courtier's sycophant!
Packed in with courtiers, spaniel courtiers, let
Him join, and kennelled in the palace please,
While we, sincere, keep leagued together here.
One steady friend's worth all the shifting throng:
A friend in need,
A friend in deed,
'S a friend *indeed;*
And my misfortunes prove your faithfulness.
I 'd almost sooner club with bigot Knox,
Who barks in church, and bays so furiously;
As I myself have felt, in our St Giles';

---

[14] Melv. pp. 58, 60.
[15] Melv. p. 64.—Crawf. pref. p. 37.

When from his box he sees a catholic,[16]
His prey to worry, heedless of the pain
He gives, as of the pope's anathema;
Or the ambitious godly Murray's self;
Than with a tongue-devoted, trifling tool;
A temporizing courtier; a sweet, slid,
Slight, silken, servile, spaniel courtier.—
'T is said that Melvil plays a double game;[17]
Delights his mistress, and her rival too:
Her Grace's chamberlain, and England's tool,
He 's equally beloved by both the Queens.[18]
His spaniel will remind her of himself;[19]
When on her embassies, supply his place;
And her cajole, while he 's Elizabeth's
And Cecil's spaniel; spaniel courtier.

Tailz. Sometime ago, your Majesty had great
Good reason to complain; but, sure, of late,
The Queen has altered much in her regards:
The number of inquirers has increased:
And Bothwell's self, her favourite minister,
At her request, has been permitted, here,
T' express his tenderness and loyalty.

Darn. His artfulness and subtlety! Have you
Not, Tailzeour, heard what Robert told of him?
What Robert Stewart, brother to her Grace,
The Earl of Orkney, indirectly, said?
That he occasioned this disease; and plots,
Even now, upon my life?[20] 'T was politic
To have him reconciled: to blind the world,
And give her favour countenance. I like
Not this quick change; this boundless preference
To one upon the level of his rank
So long, without desert:[21] these shameless trips;
Familiar visits up the frith with him;
And sudden leaves for Edinburgh again,
On my approach:[22] these frantic flights to him,
While ill, from Jedburgh to Hermitage;

---

[16] Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1564, p. 191.—Hume, Eliz. a. 2, 1565.
[17] Melv. Ded. p. 3.—Mem. p. 107.
[18] Melv. p. 173.—Tytl. p. 276. [19] Melv. p. 58.
[20] Buch. L. 18.—Melv. p. 78.—Crawf. pref. p. 42.
[21] Melv. p. 67. [22] Melv. p. 77.—Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1566, p. 196.

So far in winter too: these honours showered
On him at Stirling; with such glaring marks,
In presence of the foreign deputies,
Of chief authority, as made me shun
The very baptism of my only child;[23]
Retire to my apartment; and from thence
Then seek protection in a foreign land,
Had not this, yet, mysterious malady
Attacked me on the way.—But she can twist;
And turn; and lead;[24] and fashion me at will:
Make vice, polluted vice, assume, with ease,
The spotless garb of perfect innocence:
The prince of darkness seem a messenger
Of light! I lost Elizabeth, through love
Of her: through love and jealousy of her,
I joined in Rixio's death; and, by the force
Of this ascendant, yielded up, for her,
My friends, and faith, and character at once;
To gratify her keen revenge, I threw
Them off; disclaimed connection with the deed;
And left myself entirely in her power,
Without a friend, unless through pity led,
To succour me: through love; through doting love,[25]
At last, I 've left, with all my vassals leal,
Adherents, and remains of influence there,
Too, in the west, my sickly father's self,[26]
To follow her to this lone house, away
From help, amidst these ruined relics round;[27]
The cause, no doubt, of the reports I 've heard,[28]
But cannot trust, that 't was prepared by th' Earl,
For undisturbed assassination safe.
O, nature's tempter! formed to varnish guilt;
Seducing partner, woman! Eve; even Eve,
Scarce from his side, 't was, flattered Adam first
To sin and shame, by her enticing arts;
By the deceitful poison of her tongue!
Yes! the most deadly poisons oft are sweet

---

[23] Melv. p. 77.
[24] Melv. p. 77.
[25] Melv. p. 77.
[26] Rob. B. 4. 1566, 1567.
[27] Buch. L. 18, Act. cont. Mar.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[28] Melv. p. 78.

To taste ; rich viands most destructive prove
To health ! Yet, by her charms ! I must regard
Her still ! No sooner she appears, than all 's
Forgot at once, and vanishes away.[29]——
Set me the stand.—I think I 'll finish out
The answer to my father's note. I may
Not, hence, have such an opportunity.
His wife, my mother, long a prisoner
In London, as they both were formerly,[30]
Within the Tower, at spite of my success
With Scotland's prize, and all his family,
On the estate he 's there, are distant hence,
In England, under galled Elizabeth,[31]
Her rival queen, unfriendly to her Grace ;
To me ; to Scotland's peace ; to Scotland's power.
To-morrow were the time to satisfy,
Neglected too, in exile from disgrace,[32]
My anxious parent best about my health ;
But, something whispers me to end it, seize
Th' occasion now ; this night, without delay :
We know not what to-morrow may bring forth.——

A writing-desk being placed before him,

I shall request your presence here, my friends,
When I have done. Meantime, you may retire.
[*Exeunt Attendants.*

After writing sometime, reads.

" Since writing the above, on being informed
" His wife was ill in Fife, the prior James
" Has just set out from this to cross the frith,
" In spite of an alarming gathered gloom,
" And rising eastern wind, that has increased
" Since noon : though many cannot think his love 's
" So strong ; but, rather, that 't is some deep stroke
" Of policy has made him venture it."—
'T is like the apostate's nature thus to skreen

[29] Buch. L. 18. [30] Melv. p. 58. [31] Melv. p. 106.
[32] Melv. p. 166.—Hume, Eliz. C. 2. 1567.

Himself. What can it mean? I hear, of late,
He 's scrupled not to make advances even
To Bothwell! Nay, has gained upon him! Can
He work so deep: so probe: so penetrate
Th' inevitable consequence of things!
Then; 't were not wonderful, if he has urged,
And left the Earl to murder me; my death
Still unrelinquished, foiled at first; from Perth
When we returned,—and after that,—and since.[33]
'T was so I thought the tale of Robert ran,[34]
Of Orkney's earl, a brother to her Grace,
The Queen herself; at least I solved it so;
To ruin him, and glut, and gratify
Himself. A place could not have been prepared
More fit: a waste already shunned, as stained
By the unhallowed blight of sacrilege,
Save by a foe from birth and rivalry,
And he, even he, at helpless distance too,
A Hamilton, my rooted enemy;[35]
Abandoned to the use of outcast thieves;[36]
And made disastrous by his brethren's zeal
And bigotry, those savages that lead
Reform. The traitor; both to church, and state!
O, natural; most unnatural relative!
Dissembling traitor!—Yet, 't is too refined;
'T might over-reach the grand arch-traitor's self.
The issue 's too uncertain for so bold
A stroke. No; no: it cannot be. Besides,
With such humanity has Hepborne borne
Himself of late, 't were black ingratitude
To pay it back with dark, ungenerous,
Injurious suppositions. Then, the Queen
Sleeps also here below. When I laid this
My information open to her Grace;
As but a whimsy of her brother's brain,

---

[33] Melv. p. 56.—Rob. B. 3, 1565.—Tytl. pp. 211, 231.
[34] Melv. p. 78.—Crawf. pref. p. 42.
[35] Buch. L. 18.—Melv. pp. 42, 56, 105.—Rob. B. 3. 1560.
[36] Buch. Act. Cont. Mar.

A freak to frighten me, which he denied; [37]
It seemed so groundless as to raise her mirth:
She called me coward; foolish simpleton,
For my credulity; and said she ran
As great a risk herself. It cannot be.—

Writes again—and reads.

" The Queen, with Reres, yet sleeps beneath my room,[38]
" In the green bed put up for her.[39] She means,
" To-night, to celebrate Sebastian's love
" To her attendant Carwood; and, of course,
" Goes to be present, for the palace hence:
" But will, as usual, after it return.
" She still has stood to her intentions, formed
" At Glasgow, of obliging him to make
" Full reparation; though, in consequence
" Of the enlivenings this gay Frenchman's jests,
" And tunes, so oft have furnished to her Grace,
" She purposes, his vanity to work
" Upon, to make her orders palatable,
" And please him with a masque and banquet, held
" In the great hall in Holyrood; herself
" Directing: but returns to this again.[40]
" My bed-room she 's hung round with tapestry:
" And for the new black figured velvet bed,
" I mentioned formerly, she has put up
" An older purple travelling one, less worth,[41]
" Lest it were soiled; for, in my chamber 's placed
" A vat, in which I bathe, as was prescribed
" When in the west. 'T is covered with a door,
" By way of lid, when not in use. 'T was taken
" Its hinges off, this turn to serve: It filled
" The portal at the entrance of the house.[42]
" She by persuasions I could not resist,
" As formerly I wrote, has reconciled
" Me to the Earl of Bothwell's courtesies,
" And had him here just now, with other lords.

---

[37] Melv. p. 78. [38] Paris's Confession.—Anders. v. 2, p. 192.
[39] Whit. c. 3, p. 260, *et seqq.* [40] Mary's 1st Let. to Bothw. —Whit. v. 2, p. 298. [41] Buch. L. 18.
[42] Buch. L. 18.—Qu. Mary's 1st Let. to Bothw.—Whit. v. 2. pp. 260, 261.

" They both so kind have been, as to induce
" Me almost to discharge the vessel I
" Bespoke. But, still I languish much for want
" Of company ;[43] though my attendants do
" What can be done ; and faithful Crawford fast
" Is bound to me, as to yourself: Yet those
" Of rank, as, still, the french ambassador
" Le Croc, are always with the Queen. My muse,
" However, oft amuses me. The Prince,
" My Son, is with her Grace, and well. My own
" Physician called just now ; but wished to wait
" For the effects of sleep. To-morrow, then,
" If this old solitary house, the chief,
" And now the last of its collegiate church ;
" The provost's habitation once ; shall brave
" The shock and fury of the storm, and fall
" Not, levelled with its prebends' stalls, to crown
" The dull and frightful heap of ruins round,
" The previous work of presbyters profane,[44]
" I hope to add a Note with good accounts ;
" And wait to hear you 're well again.—

THE QUEEN.[45]

" Meantime ;
" To your parental blessing, join a prayer,
" For your affectionate son ; one fervent prayer,
" For the unfortunate, and absent,
" HENRY."

Mary. Amen ! And may his prayers to keep him safe,
Fly to the abodes of bliss ! be heard in heaven !—
(aside.)—

Darn. The Queen !—How came your Grace unno-
[ticed here ?

Mary. My Lord ; an invalide ; and writing thus,
So late ! As I was coming up, it struck
The hour of ten !

Darn. 'T is best to make the most
Of present time ; for none can tell what checks

---

[43] Melv. p. 97.
[44] Rob. B. 3, 1565.
[45] Buch. L. 18.

The future may bring forth.

Mary. Whence comes, my Lord,
This moralizing vein? 'T would better suit,
When not deranged, the whine of mad Glencairn;
A leader of Reform; or Knox himself,
Who more delights in fearless railings harsh.[46]
How is your Majesty this night in health?

Darn. I 'm so, with the exertions of the day,
Fatigued, I know not. But, when I get up
To-morrow, I shall wait to welcome, here,
Your Grace, I trust, with fresher looks. Between;
How does the Prince? I hope I have not gone
Beyond the truth in writing he is well.

Mary. My Lord, you have not: For I saw him, now,
In spirits, and in health; in perfect health;
His little arms outstretched, he tried, I thought,
To lisp his father's name; he seemed to call
You, ere he fell asleep; 't was the last thing
He did. Would that your Majesty were near
As well! 'T was only for yourself, I felt
Concerned.

Darn. And may the calls of innocence
Be heard above; to my advantage hence!
Poor infant! Thou hast yet but feebly proved
A father's care! Thou knowest not his name;
Nor would himself! But, take; his blessing take;
As his return.—'T is only sleep I want
For strength. An hour yet hence I 'll have enough,
And more, I am afraid, than I shall use,
Before this tedious night shall end;[47] before
This masque is o'er, and you come back; before
My good physician waits to visit me,
When you, my love, are here again.

Mary. O, all
Ye stars! ye constellations that resolve
And fix our destinies! see, and attest
My struggles pure! Ye ruling heavenly powers!
Impute whate'er may happen, not to me.
O, pity my distress! exchange, for ease,
The mental rack and torture now I feel. *(aside.)*

---

[46] Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1564, p. 191.
[47] Queen Mary's 1st Letter to Bothw.

Darn. 'Whence comes this agitation? tell me, whence
This strange, distracted, wandering of look?
Why are you so o'erwhelmed with thought; absorbed,
And buried deep, as if within yourself?
It cannot be for *me*; for, on the whole,
I 'm gaining fast, in body and in mind
Improving fast; so fast, I soon expect,
As erst, the palace will receive us both.
This is a dreary house; till it is down,
Or by a storm of wind or sacrilege,
Some fresh irruption of barbarians raze 't,
Here Reformation 's incomplete; this wreck
Of taste is prematurely stopped, before
The work profane is perfected, and all
Is levelled to a leveller's will; for, yet
Some small remains may possibly be left
Of min'ste'ral majesty to venerate:
I wish I may get from it safe.[48] What made
The Earl select this solitary house,
With wastes, and stews, and lanes of thieves begirt?[49]
The almoners' abodes discovered 'mongst
The ruins, the few silly women's huts,[50]
Seem left to heighten, dismal, the effect,
Contrasting it with the good catholic times,[51]
By the remembrance of the past, and wean
Us from the world, before we join the ghosts
And apparitions of the dead, that haunt
Such spectral spots, by them inhabited,
When on the sites were houses, lodgings like
To this, and they, like us, were clad in clay,
Till hence dismissed. If chose to breed, and pale
Morality to foster, in the view
Of death, a better place he could not well
Have pitched upon. A Hamilton, though next
His family, and here, 's not near, to give
Reluctant aid,[52] if aid he would afford
To balk his wish.[53] 'T was empty, as I 've heard

---

[48] Anders. Diplom. Scot. pp. 18, 66.—Rob. B. 4. 1567.—Whit. v. 3. p. 241.—Arnot's Hist. of Edinb.—A Provost, and ten Prebends officiated.
[49] Buch. Actio cont. Mar.
[50] Whit. v. 3. pp. 233. 243.
[51] Buch. L. 18.—Crawf. p. 278.
[52] Melv. pp. 42, 56, 105.
[53] Melv. pp. 42, 56, 105.
[54] Rob. B. 3. 1565. B. 4. 1566.

Till now 't was suddenly possess'd for *me*.[54]
Mary. He said, if I forget not, to be free
From the contagion of the town;[55] and lest
Your own complaint should seize the prince.[56] Although
'T is varied happily in sites and scenes,
With heights and hollows open to the sea
To ventilate, and cleanse, and rectify,
And feed supply of fresh and wholesome air
To this our ancient capital, within
Its safe protecting city walls, so near
The palace, nor the Earl, nor I a place
Could find with such advantages for health.[57]
Lord Borthwick's here, you know, was much improved.[58]
Besides, it stands on hallowed ground; once held
In reverence, and consecrated, too,
To that pure Virgin Saint, whose holy name
I bear myself; hence should be doubly dear.
Darn. So elevated, none I recollect
Indeed: 't was kindly thought: had such regard,
Attention, always marked my queen, no harsh
Domestic quarrel e'er had us disturbed;
I ne'er had sunk into indifference;
Your foreign favourite Ricci ne'er had fallen
Beneath the poinard's point; I had not wished
To fly, and banish me abroad.
Mary. Just heaven!
'T was near this very time, last year! 'bout this,
This solemn hour, he was despatched.[59]
Darn. By fate,
Mysterious fate, this time! This very time,
This very hour! 'Tis ominous! I like
It not![60]— [fly?[61]
Mary. (Recovering.) But, would you still resolve to
First, think, revolve, and weigh; consider well
The consequence of such a step: make some
Return at least, for my solicitude
And care. You once denied intending it.[62] [heard
Darn. At Glasgow. Then 't was fixed. Although I

---

[54] Buch. Act. Cont. Mar.
[55] Rob. B. 4. 1567.
[56] Rob. B. 4, 1567, Note.
[57] Melv. p. 78.
[58] Whit. vol. 3, p. 216.
[59] On 9th March 1566.—Buch. L. 18.
[60] Buch. L. 18.
[61] Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[62] Qu. Mary's first Letter to Bothw.

You 'd published forth my faults,[63] I knew 't would give
You pain, and hid the scheme. Your winning care
Of late has almost made me change. Yet, fly
I must; abandon you; my only son,
An eldest son myself; my father sick;[64]
My vassals in the west; my country; nay,
My kingdom; to avoid neglect, the slights
And contumelies I 've endured. Fly hence:
With sleets, and snows, and mists, and rains, and storms;
Morose and moody melancholy leave;
Get free of cares and griefs, if possible,
In giddy France,[65] the happy land of mirth,
And levity, and thoughtlessness, amidst
The joy-inspiring flowers, and fruits, and warmth,
Delicious grapes, and bacchanalian wines,
And gentle airs of climate gay and light,
As are the lives of its inhabitants,
Who have your heart, I *there* may find. I 've lost
It here. It back has flown to France again.

Mary. Beloved France!—And will you thus desert
Me? Unprotected, leave me to insults,
And worse? your helpless infant to its fate?
Us both, amongst assassins, traitors, fierce,
Rebellious, sacrilegious, hypocrites,
Unfeeling savages, rude infidels,
Apostates, free-booters, and thieves?

Darn. How, nursed
In flattery, can I brook affronts?[66]—But keep
Not pensive.—Yet, my love, I may return.
Nay, yet, I may remain at home; with Reres,
If you 'll give up the countesses of Marre,
Argyl, and Murray, with her hated lord's
Associate secretary Lethington;[67]
Will live with me as formerly; forget
The past; and part no more.—I wish that Reres,
Who still continues to attend you here;
And Paris, too; may lend their services
Much to the honour of their Queen.[68] Yet, read

---

[63] Qu. Mary's 1st Let. to Bothw. [64] Rob. B. 4, 1566, 1567. [65] Rob. B. 4, 1566. [66] Mary's 1st Let. to Bothw.—Rob. B. 4, 1566. [67] Qu. Mary's 1st Let. to Bothw.—Rob. Append. to v. 1, No. 17. [68] Qu. Mary's 1st Let. to Bothw.—Whit. v. 3, p. 263.

This letter; and you 'll find how you have gained
Upon my resolutions.[69] *(Handing the letter to the Queen, who reads:)*——Why, you pause
And hesitate; as if I 'd said amiss.
Mary. 'T was only with regard to my return
To-night. Eleven 's the hour, at which I must
Go down.[70] Till Sunday 's o'er, the masque cannot
Commence. Though I 'd resolved to be again
With you, the entertainment, thus, I doubt,
Prevents its possibility. To-night
I, then, within the palace, where 't is held, [you droop—
Must sleep.[71]——What ails my Lord?—You muse—
Your changing colour speaks that you 're disturbed?
Darn. 'Twas only an attack of my complaint;
A sudden qualm—a momentary fit
Of sickness—that is gone.—
Mary. *(Reads aloud.)* "They, both, so kind
Have been, as to induce"—With how much more
Delight I feel, from this, I still preserve
Your love, than all the selfish compliments
Of those that give you pain!—*(Returning the letter.)*
But why, my Lord,
"Unfortunate," when you are gaining strength?
Why so unusually solicitous
To have your Father's prayers?
Darn. 'T was the effect
Of something I cannot explain. For, whilst
I writ, it came involuntarily:
The tale of Robert gleamed athwart my mind,[72]
And, like a friendly shade, indited it.
What could occasion Bothwell to withdraw
So oddly from the room this afternoon,
While Huntly, Cassilis, and Argyl, remained?[73]
Mary. I nothing saw, my Lord, in him to note.
Darn. Some strange, distracting apprehensions haunt
My mind, and make me, somehow, dread this night.

Q

---

[69] Buch. L. 18. [70] Whitaker. [71] Buch. L. 18.—Whit. v. 3, p. 271.
[72] Melv. p. 78. [73] Whit. v. 2, p. 432.

I wish 't may bring no mischief on my head,
While you are gone. I 'd deem that all was safe,
Were I the Calton-hill, and Arthur's-seat
Between, within the palace, and away
From this exposed, and melancholy place.
I thought myself secure, when you were here.
Mary. O trust! O conjugal demands! how act
Can I, when all 's uncertainty! *(Aside.)*
Darn. But, why
Be grieved? Be not uneasy, though I 'm fixed,
Unable to accompany you hence.
Why, so cast down, and pensive? 'Tis but one
Short night. One fleeting night. Nay, not so much.
When we shall meet again, I think, we 'll part
No more!—*(Clock strikes, as if at a distance.)*—
Meanwhile, I'll not detain you now;
For, as I thought, I heard your hour.
Mary. O love!
O faith! *(aside.)* Yet let me stay.—A little yet.—
The messenger is not yet come.——

PARIS.

Paris. May 't please
Your Grace; the entertainment is prepared.
The servants all attend; and anxiously
Within the Palace wait, in idleness,
For farther orders.[74]
Mary. Still, then, let them wait.
Do you remain without, till I go down. [*Exit Paris.*
Darn. Come; let not, thus, your tender care prevail.
Of disappointment I 'll not be the cause;
Even of a peevish wish, against my Love.—
One kiss? *(Kisses her;)*—One parting kiss? *(Again;)*—
[This last, to give
Our little boy? *(Again;)*[75]—And, now, with blessings on
Yourself, and him; adieu.
Mary. Accept of this; *(Giving a ring.)*
This token fresh of love.—I 'll put it on.[76]—

---

[74] Whit. v. 3, p. 201.
[75] Buch. L. 18. [76] Buch. L. 18.

Farewell; and may your father's prayers be heard!
Farewell! *(going)*

Darn. Another yet adieu!

Mary. *(Looking back)* Farewell!—
[*Exit the Queen.*

Darn. How great a change! How happy a return
Of love! *(Kissing the ring;)* so bright the prospect now
It elevates my drooping soul; and makes [appears,
A tide-like vigour flow through all my frame!

Taking up the Letter;

When I 've corrected this mistake I made
About her meaning to return to-night,
I 'll add a Postcript e'er I seal it up.

Writes; and reads;

" You 'll be o'erjoyed to learn, again, the Queen
" Is just retired, from visiting me here,
" To grace her masquerade, at Halyrud;
" Where, notwithstanding what I wrote, she wills,
" Most unexpectedly, to sleep this night;
" But, ere she went reluctantly from hence,
" Has given such proof of her returning love,[77]
" As you, I 'm sure, would wonder at. God grant
" It may continue! All would, then, be right,
" As erst. Yet, still, forget not my request;
" A father's blessing, and his prayers. Adieu!"

Folding up, and sealing the Letter;

This was the hour when Crawford promised, sure,
T' attend; before I went to sleep.—He used
To be more punctual to his charge.—" Just heaven!—
" 'T was near this very time last year!—'bout this—
" This solemn hour—he was despatched!"—'T ran so—
It did—" *Just heaven!*"—These were her very words!—

After a long, deep pause; and much agitation;

Ha!—yes—'t is he!—'t is Rixio's self!—the same,
Justitia! Justitia! the cry.——I struck
Thee not!——'T was Ruthven!——sick——pale Ruthven,
[plunged

[77] Buch. L. 18.

The leading dagger.[78]—Douglas!—Mortoune, too!
'T was he that watched within the palace court:
The Prior's deputy; Elizabeth's;
Her Cecil's, tools. They made a dupe of me,
To kill, or foil the Queen. 'T was England's spite;[79]
To balk the prospects, from her pregnancy;
The claims of Scotland to the english crown;
And bring her instrument, th' apostate, back,—
Why scream'st thou, then, "*Justitia!*" still from *me*
"*Justitia!*" *now*, retributive, as due?
As due, on me, retributive to *thee*?—
Yes; I, I see it sticking! but, he snatched
It from my side: I gave 't him not. Why comest
Thou then, with riddled carcase here?—Ha! Do'st
Thou smile; with all these wounds? Will fifty-six
Deep stabs not keep thee quiet; thy triumph check?—
The carpet kindles fast, beneath his feet!
It gains upon him.—Smiling yet! Thy cap,
Too, holding high!—Up!—Up!—Look, how he burns!
And grins, with mutterings inaudible!
And waves, and rounds the circling bonnet, 'midst
The flame; and the ascending smoke!—Look!—Look!
How, light as air, exulting rises—see!—
Thy favourite Ricci!—What loud noise was that,
I heard!—'T is he blown up!—Do 'st thou forgive 't?
Fly! Ha, ha, ha!—yes—could I; from myself—

After a pause; collecting himself, as if awaking from a dream.

'S death; how this illness works upon my brain!
Disturbs my conscience, and excites remorse!
Justitia! loud, keeps ringing in my ears!
As, unatoned, 't were yet to expiate.
Is n't this; and all forgiven?—Crawford.

CRAWFORD.

Crawf. All hail!
Darn. Had you,
My faithful visitor, but staid a short
While later, I had charged you with neglect.

---

[78] Rob. B. 4. 1566. [79] Rob. B. 4. 1566.

Crawf. In this, my Liege, I have not been to blame;
For, scarce had I groped down its endless stairs,
In thorough flights its tenements to suit,
And got, fatigued, from underneath the land,[80]
That joins, by twelve ascending crowded floors,
The Cowgate with the street about St Giles',
And church, and booth, and shop surrounded close,
Near the great hall where parliament convenes,
Beside the courts of justice, and the jail,
When, by a light that through a window shone,
As looking eastward, toward Holyrood,
'Twixt and the wynd of the Dominicans,
Blackfriars that preach, the *Jacobins* of France,
Which terminates, below, at Beaton's house,
I saw three men advancing from the Port.
For sure they 'd marked me for their prey; and wished
To steal upon me unawares. Before
I 'd crossed the hollow pass, to take th' ascent
On t' other side, they had so near approached,
That, to avoid the snare, I was obliged
To hurry to the west, even to the yard
Of Knox's "hypocritis and monsters" gray,
Of the Franciscans, ere, by circuit wide,
I durst seek out a safer road to this.

Darn. Then welcome now! Although without excuse,
'T would not blot out remembrance of the past;
Encroach upon my gratitude, for all
Your former fealties. In times so loose,
The best are least secure.

Crawf. I am o'erpowered,
My royal Lord and master, with th' increase
Of your partiality, and goodness.

Darn. O,
My faithful confidant! No wonder, now,
My joy o'erflows on you in fresh regards,
When from the Queen, this instant, I 've received

---

80 A *Land*, in Scotland, is a house divided into a number of tenements and stories or floors, under one roof, all entering from a common stair, which is also sometimes a thoroughfare from a higher street to a lower. It is generally named from the person who built it, as *Buchanan's Land, Robertson's Land.*

Such proofs of love restored, and happiness
To come, as would diffuse themselves, around,
In acts of kindness, and philanthropy,
Even on a foe! I 'm all benevolence,
And charity!

Crawf. Thank heaven 't is so! May 't hold
More lasting than before! May this return
Of love, that first began to dawn, when led,
I will presume, by it, as she approached,
To meet, and in her train t' attend her west,
Your noble father sent me in his stead;[81]
When, glad to find it warming as I wished,
My roused and friendly ear imbibed, at nights,
Your daily conversations with the queen,
When she to cherish you had there arrived,
At Glasgow; these endearments, may they grow
In number, shine intense, and set no more!

Darn. Had you but seen with what unwillingness,
And pain she hence retired; was forced away!
(Showing the Ring.)
How she even left this pledge of plighted faith!
This proof of her renewed, and fixed regard.
Nay, by our loves, she begged to put it on! *(Kisses it.)*
And, with her lovely finger hooped my own;
Invoking heaven to hear my father's prayers!—
I kissed her thrice—and thrice she said farewell.

Crawf. How much I feel your joy, my Liege, the part
I take in your concerns is evidence.

Darn. How different this, to Glasgow ere I went,
From her behaviour, publicly avowed,
At Stirling, when abandoned;[82] when, with scorn,
She saw me in the airy castle left,
The pinnacle of the ascending ridge
Of peopled rock alone, without a friend;
Left, with my muse, my only company,
To muse upon the spreading flat below,
And count, and wonder at the mazy twists,
And doublings of the drowsy Forth, from side
To side, that, like a sluggish snake, creeps on,
From west to east, from the head mountain peaked,

---

[81] Mary's 1st Let. to Both.—Tytler. [82] Melv. p. 77.

Ascending high, of the wild wooded sheet
Of Lennox loved, with all its isles adorned,
The studded Lake, the parent of the clear
And rapid stream that, at our mitred Rock,
Its western estuary joins, to this
Broad frith, expanding round its crown-shaped Bass,
Where, on the cliffs, the screaming gannet breeds;
Left, still more piteous hours to spend myself,
The baptism o'er, while she, and the gay court,
In caps and bonnets plumed, and feathered hats,
And fluttering scarfs, bright plaids, and waving cloaks,
And glittering arms, and guards, and cheers amidst,
With all the foreign deputies were gone,
Before this strange disease arrested me,
Upon my way to Glasgow, stopping, sure,
Th' intended flight from the disgrace they brought;[83]
Nay, left, even while 't was celebrating; whilst
Her sparkling soldiers peace and order kept,
The elevated town, decked out with laced
Attendants, richly dressed, rang loud
Their acclamations round my sombre room,
And shone as far as its ascending fires,
Without impediment, could shoot their beams,
Dilating east and west, and north and south,
In one continued blaze of joyful light![84]
And all for my own son! my only child!
Baptized with every rite I venerate,[85]
By which, at mass, by Rixio's advice,
I married her at Halyrud, although,
In England, I professed reform, when there,
Through policy, I seemed a protestant![86]—
How widely opposite the prospect now!

Crawf. Since then, my sire, the conduct of the queen
Is much improved, and flattering indeed.

Darn. I wish, my friend, howe'er, this night was past.
'T was strange, as if inspired, that, while her Grace
Was here, she said it was the very time
At which her favourite Rizew was despatched!—

---

[83] Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[84] Rob. B. 4, 1566.
[85] Spotsw. L. 5, An. 1567, p. 214.
[86] Melv. pp. 56, 57.—Rob. B. 3, 1565.

I scarce could hide the shock th' intrusion gave;
Or yet pass off the height of my surprise,
When, on the instant told, against her wont,
She meant not, from the masque to-night, to leave
The palace, or come here to Kirk-a-field.
Crawf. Its late commencement this, my liege, may cause.
Darn. This old deserted house is much exposed;
And 't is a dreadful night. Good God! how fierce
The storm attacks its crazy walls! Do, help
Me up, to look if aught can be observed
Without?

After being assisted to the window; opens the shutters, and looks through.

How bright the vivid lightning shines!
And darts, so early, thus so seldom seen,
Athwart the gloom![87] The winter is but o'er;
The spring begun. Why has the bishop placed
Those lights, watch-lights, in 's brother Arran's rooms,
He occupies so unexpectedly,
And anxiously?[88] Although my foe, none such
Appeared before. No danger seems to threat:
Sure, none from *me*.[89]—What can these men, that gleam,
That sheet of fire disclosed, be doing 'mongst
The ruins, such a night?—Observe toward
The east, and wait the flash!—There!—Did n't you [mark,
Perceive a knot of them, as if engaged
About some interesting plot—in wait,
Behind the shelter of the wall?[90]
Crawf. My Sire,
I did. But, it were vain to follow them,
Were they on ill designs, it is so dark.
"Brief is the lightning in the collied night,
"That (in a spleen) unfolds both heaven and earth;
"And ere a man hath power to say, Behold!
"The jaws of darkness do devour it up."[91]
Besides, 't is likely, some of those employed

---

[87] Melv. p. 78. [88] Buch. L. 18.
[89] Melv. p. 105. [90] Whit. v. 3, p. 297.
[91] Shaksp. *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

In the conveyance of the furniture
Her Grace was shifting to the palace hence.[92]
Darn. Was n't that a light, that, yonder, glid toward
This house? Weak, nestling thieves cannot have, sure,
Designs to enter here. 'T is as you say.
They 've come, perhaps, for something they 've forgot.
But, list?—What frightful moan is that I hear?
'T is from the west, the blasted remnants, left,
Of this once holy sanctuary, sent;
Or charnel vault; or sepulchre, for good;
Struggling against the wind, to presage ill.
Crawf. May I remind your Majesty, 't is late.
'T will throw you back, to want your rest so long.
'T is near the hour of twelve![93]
Darn. I cannot bear
A thought of bed to-night.—I shudder at
The name of rest.—I cannot think of sleep. [strange,
Crawf. Let not, my Liege, these wild chimeras,
Inexplicable apprehensions dire,
Diseases oft, to their own prejudice,
Create, prevail upon you to retard,
By more fatigue, such hopeful prospects; stay
Returning health. Do, let refreshing sleep
Revive the vigour you have lost.

Darnly rings; and, in a little, enter,

TAILZEOUR; MACAIG; *and* GLEN.

Darn. Come then,
My friends. My faithful confidant, good night:
For, I have kept you late. You will, I hope,
Excuse these whimsies of the brain; of long
Unhinged, debilitated frame. Betimes,
With light, return again, and you shall hear
Wha our joint friend, good Abernethy, says.
Before, get this sent off with care.—
(Giving the letter to Crawford.)

What

[92] Buch. L. 18. [93] Whittaker.

I meant
T' have kept it till to-morrow; but, I 'm urged,
Just now, somehow, to send it off to night.
'T is to my sire, the Earl of Lennox, sick;
To whom you are as trusty as to me.
Despatch 't immediately, if possible;
For Glasgow, his retreat even when in health,
At Lennox-house, th' Archbishop's palace near,
Adjoining its sublime Cathedral light;[94]
As well you know, so teach the messenger:
Straight from Dunbar, the wind is in the east;
In jerkin light, his plaid will be his sail;
Both strong, and fair for him, 't will speed his way
From Forth to Clyde, across the parting ridge;
For Glasgow, post, it courts him to its course.

Crawf. I shall; and may I find my Sovereign still
Improving, when I come to wait on him! [I' ve seen

Darn. Thanks, Crawford. A good night; and thanks!
The day, when I could send a guard of troops,
T' escort you to your home. But, now; now, worse
Than prisoned felon, waiting for his doom,
I 've not a soldier to protect myself.
There 's not a beggar burrows round me here,
The oldest, silliest widow of them all,
But in her hovel sleeps more safe than I.
Then, take my wishes, and regard; no more,
At present, I 've to give.

Crawf. My liege, good night!

(Hurries away to hide his pity and grief, and exit.)

Darn. Come then, my friends: 't is long since Nelson,
Will now have seen the doors were fast, and gone [true,
To wait in his apartment, off my own.[95]
He 'll be impatient grown; let us retire.
'T is but a crazy house, and much exposed,
For such a night. At every rush, it rocks;
Rocks on its cradled guests, when rocked to rest,
As if to fall, and take them unawares,
Before they wake. But, if it falls, it falls

---

[94] Rob. B. 4. March 12. 1567. Note.—Whit. v. 2. p. 12.
[95] Whit. v. 3. p. 263.

On *me*, as well as you. Thank heaven, the queen,
And prince are safe! The palace towers are strong,
And sheltered low, amidst protecting heights,
And royal guards, guards, though a king in name,
Denied to me. The maskers, *there*, may mum,
And dance secure.—Hark! how the roaring blast,
The unrelenting hurricane, assails
These weak deserted walls! May we but hail,
In peace, the cheering sun again!
Attends. Heaven grant,
We humbly pray, your Majesty's request!
[*Exeunt, supporting the King.*

ACT V.

The Earl of Mortoune, having tried in vain
T' involve the Queen, and a death-warrant gain,
T' encourage Bothwell still, without her Grace,
His cousin Douglas sends, to fill his place;
Himself remaining near, aloof, behind,
To favour, or oppose, as fits the wind:
While Bothwell, from the Queen, and masquerade,
At Halyrud, withdraws into the shade:
Assembled, secretly, the regicides,
He by instructions his assassins guides;
Then, led by him, they ruthlessly repair
To Kirk-a-field; the sick King murder there;
The powder fire, his lodgings placed below,
And, up into the air, the inmates blow.

SCENE; A HIGH CHAMBER IN BOTHWELL'S LODGINGS, HOLYROOD-HOUSE.

BOTHWELL, *from the Masque, in a Domino; with his visor in his hand.*

Both. 'T is time this flimsy, fluttering mask were thrown
Aside, for one of other cast. This light
And trifling work, is not for such a night:
I' ve had enough of it: I 'm not in trim,
In humour now, for childish merriment:
And yet, beshrew me, if 't was not myself
This masque proposed; the idle to draw off,
And be my skreen; my skreen beneath a skreen;
A skreen, as then unlooked for, doubly hailed.
A veil has, from the east, the sun obscured,
As if to favour us, before his course
Was finished: such an opportunity
To balk; to foil this threat of th' elements,
Were flying in the very face of heaven,
That calls for some great deed befitting it!
The prince of th' air, permitted to preside,

From our dark congress, summons us in arms
To issue forth with fires sulphureous,
And offer up a sacrifice prepared.
The clock, our striking monitor, her round
Has measured, and has shown her blackest hour;
Calling on those that secresy require,
From the obstructive rays of light long since:
Called longer still, since the protecting cloud,
That intervened and shut them out, appeared.
None, but accomplices, or such as lurk
Beneath the like protection, we may trust,
Will stir from home, to venture forth, at such
A time, on such a murder-tempting night:
Even had this mask not been, 't were mask enough.
Each circumstance invites, with marked and strong
Solicitude.—Ha!—Who comes here; so late?—

THE QUEEN; *visored, from the Masque.*

Herself! The genuine bribe to all; the Queen! *(Aside.)*
My Royal Mistress! Welcome to your Grace![1]
Mary. (Unmasking.) My Lord; is this like the delight you used
To take in such amusements, thus, to steal
Away, so soon, and privately, without
Even taking leave; the time suggested, too,
By you yourself.
Both. Your Grace will, then, excuse
The first neglect.
Mary. From what already pass'd
This day: from what unguardedly I wrote;
And since have learned; some apprehensions fill
My mind, and charge it to another cause,
Howe'er when distant I have held it once,
I dread now to insinuate. By all
The force of truth, relieve me from suspense!
Deceive me not, by false intelligence!
Confirm the warnings I 've received! Remove
My doubt! And tell—O, tell me—is 't not so?

---

[1] Buch. L. 18; who, as was to be expected, however, puts a different construction on the interview.

Both. What does my Queen; my Royal Mistress [mean?

Mary. Are you so dull, as not to take me up?
So slow of intellect? Is the sick King,
Then, safe? Where 's avaricious Mortoune, now?
Detested, murderous Mortoune, loved by none,[3]
But, as her tool, as full of worldly craft
As Cecil's self, by false Elizabeth.
Still, does he not my acquiescence seek
To give my sanction to his thirst for blood?
Has n't he, by his address, on you prevailed,
In spite of my discountenance, to screen,
And help him to revenge?[3] Was n't this the cause
Th' occasion of your stealing off, with all
This secrecy? Your agitation told
That something, of no common issue, lay
Resolved upon. Do you not wait him here?

Both. By this, my scarlet scarf with golden fringe;
Of dye and fashion chose your taste to please!
By this, my vizard; now a mask no more!
By this, my bracelet; dearer than my life!
By this soft glove! the hilt of this, my sword!
By every obligation to your Grace!
I do not: for, no sooner did he hear
You had refused to give it your assent,
Than he abandoned, straight, the enterprise.
He 's now attending at the masque.—You, there,
May watch him, though below the common size,
For notice, by his proper mark, the Rose
Of England.

Mary. Can it be supposed, I 've then
Been duped; beguiled by what I 've seen and heard;
And even at this tremendous hour the heavens
Declare?—Distraction!—Can the sights; the tales;
The rumours raised, supported thus, so rife,
Have been but issues of appearances?
Vicious deceit; or superstitious fears?
This night; this frightful night! the mere result
Of random accident?—Where can I turn?
In what believe?

---

[3] Melv. pp. 64. 101. 118. 123. 124. 127.
Rob. B. 4. 1566.

Both. By truth's most sacred name!
I have not ventured to your Grace a word
I would not swear to!—But, why, thus, concerned,
About the preservation of a man
Who means, at all events, to fly; and heap
Disgrace upon the nation, and yourself?
Mary. He did.—Now—now, he says he 'll stay at home.
He 's altered quite. We parted drowned in tears,
When Paris came to summon me away,
As if we jointly thought to meet no more!
Both. Beshrew me, if I like this news! In doubt
Were I, 't would be enough to end restraint. *(aside.)*
Did his contempt of truth allow this new
Assertion but a grain of confidence,
'T were unavailable; for he can ne'er
Regain the reverence his pride demands.
Though softened now, he 'll scarce can crawl abroad
Till he 's the same as formerly: beneath
Some fit of spleen he 'll fly from disrepect;
And bring reproaches on us all.
Mary. The fates
Forbid! But, is it possible, he 's sunk,
He 's so completely lost to every hope
Of future reformation?
Both. Has your Grace
So soon forgot his conduct, on the death
Of luckless Rizew, as to listen still
To his unstable, faithless promises;
Or trust his transient resolutions weak;
When he no passions has t' impel; no heat
But what 's extinguished by disease? His friends;
The chancellor; let him declare, how well
He kept his word, his ends obtained.
Mary. I stand
Silenced. It must be even so. Ye saints,
How irresistible his eloquence! *(aside.)*
I 've been mistaken.
Both. Then, now, my worshipped queen,
Be satisfied. 'T was only a slight fit
Of giddiness, from the bright glare, and whirl
Of company, my agitation caused,
Which, by increase, occasioned my retreat.

Do not desert your friends, on my account.
'T will soon be off. I 'll wait upon your Grace
Of course.

Mary. You will. But when? Shall I, for sure,
Expect you there immediately? I fear
You will not come. Pray, let; do, let me take
You with me now?

Both. To throw it off, but leave
Me for a little while? Your majesty
Will me excuse. I 'm somewhat indisposed
Just now. When I can grace the masque again,
I 'll then appear.

Mary. O, do not keep me long
In pain! 'T is tearing off the ivy green,
Though weak, that shelters its supporting wall;
The glowing woodbine from the oak robust,
To which it lends its fragrance, and its charms.
By some mischievous fairy, sure, my eyes,
Last night, have been anointed while asleep,
With strongest juice of that sweet purple flower
To ruin leading, *Love-in-idleness*,
Spell-bound, itself to sleep in idleness,
Until this masque commenced that brought me here.[4]
I 've tried, with care, to guard, and guide myself;
And oft, at times, has fortune favoured me,
Relieved me from the charm, and left me right;
Yet still I find, at last, that fate is fate.
Or tempted, drawn, or blindly led astray,
You know what risks already I have run;
You know how much my destiny depends
On *you*. [*Masks, and exit the Queen.*

Both. Were I not sensible of that,
I were not thus.—How easy 't is, when got,
To angle with the fascinating bow
Of love. Th' infatuate are so keenly bent,
So eager to be caught, we scarce need bait
The hook we take them with; so, by its charms
Hood-winked, their brightest eye cannot perceive
The line they 're played withal!—Yet, 't is, at best,

---

[4] Shaksp. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act ii. Sc. 2.—*The Taming of the Shrew*, Act 1. Sc. 4.—Pope and Warburton's edition.

But an ungracious preface this, I doubt,
T' expected happiness—if happiness
It can be called, that springs from guilt improved
Upon the times and circumstances, since
Th' infernal Conference that gave it rise,
By secret industry. What, if even this,
This bastard fruit, I ripen for the taste
And palate of the men that nothing need
To do but reap it; hence, in safety, reap,
As instigators oft have done before,
The whole by my destruction; but the chaff
Alone, me leaving, poor, the swinish dregs,
The worthless draff, from whence they all have brewed.
A drowning man, 't is said, will catch at straws.
I, like the fabled dog, the shadow grasp,
For self-applause; and, in the vain attempt,
The substance miss, I doubt, if virtue's gift
It solely is, and to a conscience clear.
But, on the queen I rest, and must proceed
While sure of her. The chancellor's advice,
I find, was good; beshrew me if it fail!
I 'll follow it; for, should th' uxorious king[5]
Reclaim, and, gaining on her tenderness,
The yielding heart, he once possessed, retrieve,
By these fond interviews she has described,
I 'd lose even that on which I now depend.
In spite of my insinuating Reres,
Already they 've begun to operate,
And cause attentions that are dangerous.
I thickening rumours hear, may ruin all.
Lord Robert's warnings, too, demand dispatch.[6]
When bold necessity requires, full time
'T is then to give deliberation up.—*(rings.)*
This butcher-breeding night is long, methinks,
Of bringing forth! else Douglas had been here!—

PARIS.

Pull off these trifles; veils, scarce fit to hide
An assignation.—*(Paris helps him off with his Masquerade dress.)*—Paris, don't you feel

[5] Melv. p. 77. [6] Melv. p. 78.

Attrite? Are n't you almost afraid to stir
Abroad on such a business?
Paris. No, my lord:
Nor contrite neither.
Both. That I do believe,
With catholic credulity, of both.
Meanwhile, at least, while here, I envy you,
For your defects. Yet, 't is but skulking work
We have to set about. Suppose we 're called
To our account before 't is finished; killed
By interposing thunderbolt,[7] or storm
Defeated house. Thou hast secured, I hope,
Thy absolution, for all sins to come,
As well as past. I almost now repent
I joined Reform: It wants that useful broom,
To loosen, sweep, and cleanse foul consciences.
Your absolution does the work at once,
Effectually: It leaves no dirt behind;
No, not a speck to teaze: There 's nothing like
It in reform.[8] How many omens crossed
Your sight to day, that made you cross yourself,
And force a prayer, for each strung bead that rounds
Your rosary? A papist "finds a pin
"For every bore."[9]—*(Giving him the suit, and vizard, after being freed from them.)*—But hush! "T is not a [time
To hear thee now. We must about it straight,
My trusty Trojan, good old Priam's son.
Hark! How we 're called upon! How furiously
The friendly tempest chides![10] They 'll all be here
Immediately. Is n't every thing prepared?
Paris. It is, my Lord. We 've only to apply
The lint. When Beton and I came off, we left
Them in the orchard, just without the wall.[11] [plume,
Both. Then, put these tinsels up. This favour,
Ruff, vizor, bracelet, scarf, these silken skreens
For love to nestle in; and, in their place,

---

[7] Melv. p. 78. [8] "In those days the point of honour "was the only tie that bound men; for dispensations and absolutions "had effaced the reverence of oaths."—Sir D. Dalr. Ann. A. D. 1314. *Robert I.*

[9] Melv. p. 80. An expression actually used by Bothwell to Sir James Melville himself. [10] Melv. p. 78.

[11] Arnot's Hist. of Edinb. Appendix—Criminal Trials, Append. Conf. of Ormiston.

Before you watch the gate, lay out, for use,
My arms, and cloak. I 'll need them presently.
Then, show them, each, the private way; and see
They do not with the masquers interfere. [*Exit Paris.*
Had this been known, I need not have prevailed
Upon the queen to let my faithful Reres,
And this our confidant, attend, and guard
Her down so early; to prevent delay.——
Who 's there?—(*Listening.*)—Confusion! Sure I marked a foot!
A tread!—(*Listening again.*)—None yet: 'tis past the hour some time:
The stroke of one, long since, I heard announced.
" 'Tis now the very witching time of night,
" When church-yards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
" Contagion to this world."[12] The place is called
The Kirk-a-Field! What black, disturbed, diseased,
And restless racking intervals connect
Determinations with their dreadful acts,
Impelling to the deed! Just like a tried,
Condemned, and hopeless criminal, his way
Upon to execution, on that spurs
To death, the very change he fears, in lieu
Of what he feels from mere timidity;
Even so am I, of late, impatient grown,
Through frantic, inconsistent cowardice,
Affrighted at the anarchy within,
The hideous troubled gulf this chasm presents.

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, *armed; with a secret and steel bonnet.*[13]

Most welcome, Douglas! By the gods, I 've stretched
Each passing minute to an hour, e'er since
Th' appointed time. Beshrew me, as I live,
If 't has rebated me; although I dread

---

[12] Shaksp. Hamlet, Act iii. Sc. 7.

[13] In the historical account of Gowrie's Conspiracies, a *Secret* is explained to be a *Coat of Mail* by the Earl of Cromerty. Arnot says a *Secret* is an old Scottish word for an under coat of defence, probably made of wire, though in his account of Gowrie's Conspiracy he calls Henderson's secret a *Coat of Mail.*—Arnot's Criminal Trials. Archibald Douglas.

To inward look. Just now, I 'm not in tune
To entertain myself. By careful heaven,
There is provided here a watchful judge,
Who, seated in this breast, his fatherly
Advice, and counsels, and decrees declares,
And punishes: his frowns appal me so,
I 'm glad to seek for aught that can attract
My eye, divert and fix my thoughts
Externally, if but for present ease.
Impatient, and alone, left thus, alone,
I blush to own it now, my heart almost
Misgave me, till I saw you; made me shrink,
At what a parson slights!—But, come; a crown
And cardinal's attire upon the bench,[14]
Will quiet our consciences; will reconcile
Us to ourselves. The Chancellor is fixed;
Remains inflexible, as to direct
Assistance?

Doug. Yes, my Lord; in spite of all
I could advance.

Both. Supported by his cousin,
And countenance, his absence matters less.
He 's in the secret he first got from you,
Which he has kept; and, in your secret, still,
As well as he, you are invulnerable:
A secret yields not, like a parson's gown.
But, are n't these slippers rather fine
For such a night, and somewhat dirty work?
I wish you may not lose them to your cost.[15]—
Is Binning, and the other, Gairner, come?

Doug. They are; and wait below, for your commands.
My servants are as steady as myself.
They, willing both, attended me to this;
So soon as I had supped.[16]

Both. So far 't is well.—

EARL OF HUNTLY, *and* LORD SEATON.[17] *Unmasking as they enter.*

---

[14] Rob. B. 2.—Arnot's Crim. Tr. Arch. Douglas.
[15] His Welivat mules.—Arn. Crim. Tr. Arch. Douglas.
[16] Arn. Crim. Tr. Arch. Douglas.
[17] Rob. B. 4, March 19, April 19, June 6, 1567. B. 5. 1568, 1569.

Health to my noble brother !—To lord Seaton !
Our friend, in this great useful enterprise ;
And cousin to the secretary's self,
As Douglas, here, is to the chancellor.
With Borthwick, long ago, distinguished far
Beyond myself, our gallant Seaton shone
Undauntedly in still defending Leith,
In favour of the dowager of Guise,
By Maitland even, her secretary, left,[18]
Yet, now the queen 's, as keen a catholic.

Seat. I 'm ever prompt, my Lord, with such to serve.
Though I with Leddington have disagreed,
In favour of our ancient faith and France,
Against the Congregation, with the aid
Of faction-fostering Elizabeth,
In this, I hope, we 're not divided *now.*

Hunt. 'T is best when relatives go hand in hand.

Doug. As thus, the earls of Bothwell, Huntly, here,
With the lord Seaton, and myself attest.

Both. I ne'er before saw Huntly more gallant,
In ushering in the Queen, to grace her masque,
Along with Cassilis and Argyl, so soon
As Reres and Paris brought her down.[19]

Hunt. 'T is not
So strange, my lord, when she 's, ere long, I hope,
To fill my sister's place.[20] This preference
Is no slight evidence of my regard,
Although a boon is tacked to my consent,[21]
If even I recommend you to her hand,
And draw the marriage-contract out myself.[22]

Both. When I 'm acquit, divorced, and have obtained,
Through your exertions, and my own, at length,
The Queen,[23] I 'll only beg to share all power,
My friends, with you. I shall contend to grant
Whate'er you shall request.

Hunt. and Seat. To that, in part,
We trust

---

[18] Rob. B. 3, Nov. 6. 1550. [19] Whit. v. 3, p. 201.
[20] Melv. p. 80.—Rob. B. 4, Apr. 29. 1567.
[21] Rob. B. 4. 1567. [22] Melv. p. 80.—Whit. v. 2, p. 432.
[23] Rob. B. 4, Apr. 19, June 6. 1567.—B. 5, 1568.—Whit. v. 2, p. 432.

Both. You may; as to the crystalled rock
On which our castle stands, or Arthur's famed,
High, stern, basaltic Seat, with Samson's ribs
Provided on the south, that, from his point,
Which seems of lion couched the royal head,
O'erlooks the consecrated chapel, placed
Upon its stubborn crag.—You 're both, then, firm;
Your fortunes fixed to stake; resolved to strike!
Seat. Undoubtedly; we 've thus made up our minds.
Hunt. Were it not so, we 'd scarce, I think, be here
With you, at such a time, on such a night.
I shall be proud, for one, to have my share,[24]
As I, in writing have already shown,
Sir James's contract even by signing first,
T' induce Argyl, and others, to the same.[25]
Both. Then, let us each embrace. No other bond
But *that*; a sense of honour; and the tie
Which friendship yields; shall stain this bold attempt
To free the state from a disgraceful reign,
With want of mutual confidence. *(They embrace.)*—And
My lords, although I shall, as not required, [now,
In the mere act of blowing up the mine,
Dispense with your assistance; I shall hold
You both my partners in the whole.[26]
Hunt. and Seat. You may.
Both. Meanwhile, 't were well you were not missed
To-morrow early, we shall meet. Perhaps, [below.
The "thunder from the sky" will then account
For it sufficiently. If not, we 'll spread
Reports 't was done by th' Earl, our Chancellor;[27]
Sly Leddington, who has of it approved;
Both kins, alike, to Seaton, or to you; *(to Douglas;)*
And the Lord James, to each of us the old
The natural foe,[28] from injuries received,
As well as done. All, but the very *deed*,
The boldness of the execution, truth
Indeed must own, has, in reality,

---

[24] Whit. v. 2. p. 432.
[25] Arn. Crim. Tr. Append. *Confession of Ormiston.*
[26] Rob. B. 4. Apr. 19. June 6. 1567.—Whit. v. 2. p. 432.
[27] Buch. L. 18.—Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1566. p. 200.
[28] Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1566. p. 200.—Rob. B. 2. 1559. B. 3. 1562. B. 4. 1566.—Whit. v, 2. p. 432. v. 3. p. 228.

Been theirs, since the Craigmillar conference.—
To hinder doubt as to the Prior's part,
I got her Grace to ask him to put off
His journey for the night; to wait at least
The hurricane's decrease: but when in troubles;
Amid distractions deep, and turbulent;
In dangers; he 's at home: in tempests rough
'T is his delight to move; in storms to act. *(Aside, to Huntly, and Seaton.)*
No sooner it is o'er, than, till I 'm waked,
Divested of my cloak, ~~and brigantine,~~ my armour and
Myself, as unconcerned, I 'll forthwith lay
In bed.[29]

Doug. Where I shall also lie concealed.[30]

Hunt. Until the morning, then, my Lord, adieu:
Since you will not accept our proffered aid.

Both. To you and to our friend of Seaton, good, night.
[*Exeunt Huntly and Seaton.*
Their absence would be noted. Such high rank
Is too conspicuous for under work.

Doug. Besides, my Lord, we need them not.

Both. 'T is just.
While I prepare myself, receive Sir James,
Through whom the castle we 've secured;[31] though Mar,
Our mar, as yet, remains its governor,[32]
True to his prince, too true for us; Gilbert,
His brother, and his cousin, the third Balfour;
With those of most regard: before this time, [queen's
'T is strange they 've not arrived. Though now the
With Beton, our Hepburn, Powrie, and Dalgleishe,
And Bonkle, too, the king's own cellarer,
Will Paris keep in spirits, all the rest
Of the determined band, the nether hall
Within, that, levelling with the outer gate,
Has o'er 't the maskers in the council room,

---

[29] Arn. Crim. Tr. Arch. Douglas. Note.
[30] Arn. Crim. Tr. Arch. Douglas.
[31] Melv. p. 81.—Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1567, pp. 201. 205.—Whit. v. 3. p. 240.
[32] Rob. Dissert. on K. Henry's Murder.

Or presence chamber;[33] there to wait, till called
Upon. [*Exit Bothwell.*

From the opposite door, SIR JAMES, *his brother* GILBERT, *and* ROBERT BALFOUR;—JAMES ORMISTOUNE *of that Ilk, his uncle* ROBERT;—*and* JAMES HAY *of Talla.*

Doug. I thought, in such a case, Sir James
Would not have loitered on the way; and caused
Uneasiness.
Sir James Balf. Had you had as much work;
Important, trusty, work; to execute,
On such a night, as these relations, gained
By me, and I; in fixing on the best
And easiest access to my cousin's house;[34]
In ordering the whole; and trying all
The keys, before the doors were locked to shut
Them in;[35] perhaps the cause of this reproof
Had been reversed. To Bothwell lent; assigned,
For the occasion, by your lord, I see
You have a mind to challenge when you can,
Upon the crown of your commission ride,
And act his deputy.[36]
Gilbert Balf. A parson thinks
He has a *right* to reprimand, and rail.
Robert Balf. We know "uneasiness" can only lurk
Beneath distrust, and fear. A traitor[37] dreads—
Doug. "Traitor."—*(drawing a dagger.)*—A traitor thinks all others like—
Orm. Come: let us not disturb our harmony,
By such unmeaning taunts. We 're each, I hope,
As firm as adamant. Not, even in thought,
A Judas 'mongst the whole.
Robert Ormist. No; even in thought.
Hay. But, where 's the light that should connect us
No wonder coldnesses arise, the sun [all?
Is down.

---

[33] Keith.—Rob.—Whit.—Arnot.
[34] "Darnly lay in a lodging laitly bocht by Mr James Balfour, "Clerk-Register."—Knox, 404.
[35] Goodall.—Whit.—Arn. Crim. Tr. App. Conf. of Ormiston.
[36] Whit. vol. iii. p. 259. [37] Melv. p. 174.

Doug. (sheathing his dagger.) The sun but sets, to rise again!

BOTHWELL, *in a military cloak, and armed.—Followed by* PARIS;—BETON;—HEPBORNE, *alias John of Bowtown;*—BONKLE;—BLACKADDER; *and the rest of the Conspirators.*

Both. Sir James; and you my other props assured,
Are much befriended by the time. The nights
Of early February, are both dark,
And long: 't will not be dawn these many hours.
Sir James Balf. Had it been farther in the year, my lord,
We had not been so late. A little while
Just now, were ill exchanged, for the neglect
Of but a trifling circumstance, that might
Have been attended to.
Both. 'T is well remarked.
I doubt not then, assisted by your friends,
And Bonkle here, that no precaution safe,
Has from your foresight and your vigilance
Escaped.—You still retain the postern's key;
The little door's, which, southward in the wall,
The city's wall, from which the outlet 's made,
Leads dimly through the cellar, where the mine
Is dug, and powder lodged, into the fields;
Given out by Paris to be lost.[58] We 'll need
Its aid, by stealth, to let us through the wall.
(To Robert Balfour.)
Robert Balf. My Lord, I do; as her two esquires,
And Paris, of the Queen's own chamber doors, Beton,
Above, and underneath the King's.[59]
Paris, and Beton. We do.
Robert Balf. And Bonkle, of the cellar; where the mine
Is dug, and powder lodged.[60]
Bonkle. I was obliged
To feign to Nelson, ere he went to rest,
The doors I 'd locked within.[61]

T

---

[58] Whit. v. 3, pp. 234, 240.
[59] Whit. v. 3, p. 242.
[60] Whit. v. 3, p. 242.
[61] Whit. v. 3, p. 242.

Sir James Balf. The King retired
At twelve; so soon as Crawford had withdrawn:
Until which time, we 'mongst the ruins kept.
We, fearful, saw him through his casement look;
To Crawford sign, as if to point us out,
By the assistance of the lightning's light,
That flashes still so frequently and bright.
This Nelson parted from him, long before,
To the addition where, you know, he sleeps.—
Now, in the garden, where the Queen, with Reres,
Fatigued by her attendance, oft, the air,
Th' enlivening sun, enjoys, toward the south,
We watched; and, there, the window that receives
And gives his light, alternately observed;
Till, by its disappearance, we were sure
That all was quiet and safe; till 'twas as black,
Even at the openings round its shutters left;
As was the gloomy wall itself; or hole,
More dismal to the cellar under it:
And then, but not till then, we thought it right
To leave the place.[62]

Both. Enough; had you encroached
Even more, upon the time appointed here
To meet.——We 're all assembled now, though gone,
From family distress; at least you 've heard
'Twas so given out; in truth, by the advice
Of the Lord James,[63] to finish off, at once,
What the whole lords have oft concluded on
To be for the advantage of the state,[64]
And, by subscription, promised to defend.[65]
By this dark, solemn, midnight hour! to rid
The realm of an intruder into power
He is unfit to wield, in days of old,
When Rome's celebrity was at its height,
When even a Cæsar's death was virtue deemed,
Had been embraced, to crown the patriotism
Of god-like, Roman Brutus, and his band!
But none need doubt to have both full, and quick
Indemnity;[66] though none, I think, would flinch,

---

[62] Whit. v. iii. pp. 263, 282.
[63] Tytl. p. 4, c. 4, note.
[64] Arn. Cr. Tr. Append. Confess. of Ormiston.
[65] Spotsw. L. 5, An. 1567, p. 214.
[66] Arn. Cr. Tr. App. Conf. of Ormiston.

Even had they here a Cæsar to destroy,
With all his popularity and friends;
And afterwards a gallant Antony,
Th' avenger of his fall, to combat with.
Conspirs. None!
Both. Here 's the Bond itself; by one of us
Devised, and signed, four months ago, with th' earl
Of Huntly at its head.[67]—*(Shewing the bond.)*—Inspect
And if a spark of doubt, or fear, still lurks [it all;
Within a bosom present; to the deed,
The contract, hostile; let him pass it by.

After putting the Bond to his lips, hands it to SIR JAMES BALFOUR.

Sir James; its author; first to you.

After SIR JAMES, *each, as it goes round, salutes it.*

Hepb. 'Tis well:
For this bright steel—*(Putting his hand to his broad sword)*—had, else, been foully stained.
Hay. And with no single wound, like David slain,
Within this Palace, by this King himself,
Had, then, the traitor bled.
Both. My Hepborne leal;
Undaunted Hay; another place than this
Must be resorted to, before you 'll see
A traitor found. Beshrew me, if there 's here
A handle for suspicion. Every heart
Already 's steeled; each arm prepared, to act
In unison; and not against the cause.
I knew we all had met, with this design,
Before 'twas, thus, in form declared.—
Conspirs. All! all!
Both. Even Murray's self is not, though absent hence,
Deserving of this name; his reason 's known.
We have with us, what he could only leave;
A gift more precious than his presence here;
The aid we 've gained from his invention deep,

---

[67] Arn. Cr. Tr. App. Conf. of Ormiston.

Rough penetration, prudence, policy;
Th' effects of his abilities; which now
We follow up.[68] I hope you all observe
Me well; that so, if needful, your reports
Be thus directed, and agree.[69]

Conspirs. We do.

Both. Our access through the little postern door,
And to the house, we 'll owe to you, Sir James,
(To Sir James Balfour.)
Your brother Gilbert, and to Robert, too,
Your cousin, the owner;[70] who, with Bonkle, hold
The keys.—To the shrewd laird of Ormistoune,
With the assistance of his elder friend,
We 'll be indebted for instructions how
To set the lint.—To you, our Hepborne hot;
By the proud name of *John of Bowtown*, more
Distinguished; and brave Hay of Talla, joined,
We 'll, under my directions, trust the bold,
And patriotic, faithful, final act;
Completion of the whole; the firing off
The train.[71]——You, Douglas, with your men of steel,
And servants, Gairner there, and Binning, sly,
Your stands without the ports of Cowgate, take;
And of Saint Mary's wynd; to interrupt
Such of the maskers as may chance to tire,
And may be mad enough to venture forth,
And to return that way; averse to wait
The issue of the night, or till the Ball
Is at an end.—While Paris, you, with Beton,
Accompanied by Powrie, and Dalglieshe,
And Blackadder, keep sentinels the port
Upon of Kirk-a-Field; that looks toward
The gardens, late, of the collegiate church
Of our Saint Mary in the Fields, between
And those that once belonged to, now suppressed,
The wealthy convents of Black friars, and Gray,
Toward the west; and guard the gap

---

[68] Tytl. p. 1. c. 4, note. [69] Spotsw. L. 4, An. 1566, p. 200.

[70] As formerly quoted, according to Knox, p. 404, "Darnly lay in "a lodging laitly bocht by Maister James Balfour, Clerk-Register."

[71] Arn. Cr. Tr. Conf. of Ormiston, and Tr. of Archibald Douglas. —Whit. vol iii. p. 283.

Through which we entered to the friar's yard,
When Ormistoune and I, sometime ago;
Black Ormistoune I mean; excuse the mark;[72]
Clad in his riding cloak, for belted gown,
Come from his chamber, whence I'd sent for him;
Were joined by you in passing up the Wynd:
'Twas when the queen, and lords were with the king.[73]—
This great, and noble, most illustrious deed
Being done, we 'll then reform the state; exalt
Its fortunes, with our own: by every hope
I 've raised, we 'll put to shame, by this, the gains
From grants revoked; from forfaultures, and fines;
From all the ruins round!—Unto his post
Then, each of you.—Away! 'Tis almost *two!* [*Exeunt; Douglas and Paris, with their followers, at opposite doors.*
This gloom 's our shield, and shelter. To account
The "thunder" we may turn.[74] And this fierce storm
Will scour and clear our course, sweeping the town;
Shut close the doors; and aiding us, confine
Each prying citizen, most pleasantly,
To his own house, fireside, and bed, secure.—
While you—*(To Hepborne)*—and Talla light the match;
It may be done, I 'll in the court yard wait, [that well
Till in the air the house ascends; before
I hie me down to this.[75]
Bonkle (aside, as he goes.) My master, then,
Thy soul, dismissed from hence, may heaven receive!
[*Exeunt Bothwell, and the remaining Conspirators.*

The SCENE *opens to the Masque, in the* GREAT HALL, *or* CHAMBER *of* PRESENCE; *during a pause in the music and dancing.—Most of the masques in black dominos.*

(The QUEEN *advances; and takes* LADY REES *to a side.)*

---

[72] Crawf. p. 277.—Rob.—Whit.—Arn.—Good.—Tytl.
[73] Arn. Cr. Tr. App. Conf. of Ormiston.
[74] Melv. p. 78. [75] Arn. Cr. Tr. Arch. Douglas, note.

Athol. (Aside, to Sutherland.) Did you take note how
Bothwell stole away;
After his scout; his new dependant; gone
Sometime: the parson Douglas, Mortoune's friend?
Suth. 'Tis certain, both of them are absent now.
'Twas Seaton, that, with Huntly, too, I think,
Retired awhile; but, soon returned again.
No mask I miss, but Douglas and the Earl.
Athol. I dread the truth of the reports we 've heard.
If they are verified, I pray that Heaven,
As in promoting this unlucky match,[76]
May use me for the mortal instrument,
In its unerring hand, to drag to light,
And bring to certain punishment, the mad,
Unhappy criminal.[77]
Suth. What folly 's guilt,
When retribution is so sure! I hope
No bad intent has made him hence withdraw.
He seemed as if uneasy, ere he went.
Perhaps some fit of sickness was his cause.
Athol. 'T is barely possible. Yet, charity
Would have it so. [borne
Mort. (Aside to Maitland). Her Grace has plainly
Herself unusually to-night.
Mait. She has
Indeed. But, it may be the mere effects
Of the alarming rumours she has heard. [th' Earl
Mort. It may. Yet, strange it was, that scarce had
Retired; when she withdrew: and still appears
In agitation! But, observe her now!
And, with his former mistress, Reres, engaged;
If not deceived; his very confidant!—
Unnoticed here myself, and thus disguised,
By these, my vizard, ruff, and scarf, I 'll spy!
Marry, methinks, I will! Yes; by my faith,
It is of consequence to note her well.
Let every move, till she withdraws, be marked. *(Aside.)*
Mary. (Aside to Reres). Yes; Mortoune 's here.
['T is true: it is his size;
Curtailed, his English sword; his English ruff;

---

[76] Rob. B. 3. 1565.—B. 4. 1566.
[77] 4. An. 1567, pp. 204, 206.—Rob. B. 4. 1567.—Hume, 7.

And, as you say, his proper cognizance,
His badge: for, sure his favour 's fashioned like
The rose, in England's arms, of England's Queen.
'T is true; he 's here: but, he may act, 't is known,
By other hands. Our Hepborne; where is he?
Is Bothwell here? No longer, then, attempt
To blind me, Reres; since he has not, even yet,
Returned. Insult not, thus, and keep from use
My understanding, with thy artful tales,
Whilst Rizew's death is still to expiate;
The harbinger of all this woe,[78] confirmed,
And sealed by the Craigmillar conference;
But, rather aid my fortitude, to stand
The shock. If be it must, we must succumb;
And bear, where we cannot prevent;[79] but, now—
Oh! gracious Heaven!

A loud EXPLOSION, *as if from a distance.—The* QUEEN *starts: and, as she faints, is supported out by* RERES[80].—*The Masquers, alarmed, pull off their vizards; and remain some time mute.*

Mort. What dreadful crack? What crash
Was that?
Mait. So loud! as to awake, and move,
The sleeping earth!
Hunt. It seemed from Kirk-a-Field
To come.
Seat. It did.
Mort. No wonder, then, the Queen 's
Withdrawn, by Bothwell's Reres.
Mait. She 's apt to faint,[81]
When much alarmed.

---

[78] Spots. L. 1. An. 1565, 1566, pp. 195, 196, 197.—Crawf. pref. p. 37.—Rob. B. 4, 1566.—Whit. v. 3. p. 231.

[79] Buchanan; who, as was to be expected, accounts for Mary's behaviour otherwise.

[80] Melv. p. 78. In evidence of its *real* effects on the Queen, see the Note at the end. [81] Whit. v. 3, p. 82.

In all besides, unsuited to thy lot!
A catholic,[89] and bred in other courts![90]
By sending thee to this unhallowed place,
Without experience, or abilities,
To stem, or faction, or fanatic rage,
Or perfidy, or murder, or reform,
By practised traitors and assassins preached,
As rugged as the rock they hive upon,
At this unlucky time, thy beauty used,
As if 't were but to raise thee up, to high,
And splendid misery; to kindle wild,
Those passions, else, had been, perhaps, restrained.[91]—
O, HENRY! Had'st thou followed wisdom's ways,
With prudent, temperate virtue for thy guide;
Kept to thy creed, in England, undismayed,
Although a papist finds no mercy here,
Where custom, and precedents palliative,
Have long encouraged outrage, and revenge;
Hadst thou, by murder, not incurred this debt,
For, long' t has been observed, "*Blood will have blood*;"[92]
Thy sacred rank might, still, have been thy shield;
Thou hadst, perhaps, escaped this foul attack,
That has despatched thee to a YOUTHFUL GRAVE!

ATHOL *steps to a side, in front of the stage, and remains in a melancholy posture; while the bodies are borne in, between the dominos, a few of which are white, who separate, and range themselves; surrounded by flambeaux, and a dead march sounding.*—CRAWFORD *and* ABERNETHY, *in the attitudes of mourning, advance with the* KING'S; *on which are laid his clothes, and slippers; while the torches retire to the sides, and behind the three others of* TAILZEOUR, MACAIG, *and* GLEN.

---

[89] Spotsw. L. 4. An. 1564, p. 189.
[90] Rob. B. 3, 1564, 1565. [91] Rob. B. 3, 1565.
[92] Shaksp. *Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 5.

When the procession is closed, the dead march ceases; and after a pause, the curtain slowly descends to solemn music.[93]

---

[93] "The King followed her (the Queen) about, whithersoever she rode, but got no good countenance. So that finding himself slighted, he went to Glasgow, where he fell sick, it being alleged that he got poison from some of his servants.

"In the meantime the Earl of Bothwel ruled all at Court, having brought home the banished Lords, and packed up a quiet friendship with the Earl of Mortoun. After her Majestie's return to Edinburgh (from the baptism at Sterling) she reconciled the Earls of Huntly, Bothwell, Arguile, and others. From that her Majesty went to Sterling, to see the Prince, and returned again to Edinburgh, whither the King was afterward brought, and lodged in the Kirk-field, as a place of good air, where he might best recover his health. But many suspected that the Earl of Bothwel had some enterprize against him. Few durst advertise him, because he told all again to some of his own servants, who were not all honest. Yet Lord Robert Earl of Orkny told him that if he retired not hastily out of that place, it would cost him his life, which he told again to the Queen; and my Lord Robert denied that he ever spoke it. This advertisement moved the Earl of Bothwel to haste forward his enterprise. He had before laid a train of powder under the house where the King did lodge, and in the night did blow up the said house with the powder; but it was spoken that the King was taken forth, and brought down to a stable, where a napkin was stopped in his mouth, and he therewith suffocated.

"Every body suspected the Earl of *Bothwel*, and those who durst speak freely to others, said plainly that it was he.

"Her Majesty kept her chamber for a while. I came to the door the next morning after the murther, and the Earl of *Bothwel* said that her Majesty was sorrowful and quiet, which occasioned him to come forth. He said the strangest accident had fallen out which ever was heard of, for thunder had come out of the sky, and had burnt the King's house, and himself was found dead lying a little distance from the house under a tree. He desired me to go up and see him, how that there was not a hurt nor a mark on all his body. But when I went up to see him, he had been taken into a chamber, and kept by one Alexander Durham, but I could not get a sight of him." *Sir James Melvil's Memoires*, pp. 77. 78.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

ERRATA.

Title, *read* CASTLE ON THE GLEN.
Introd. Page xii. line 10, *read* disregarding Lord Robert Earl of Orkney's warning, and
—— —— xiii. line 15,——Morton, from Lord Robert's advertisement, from the ineffectual

Page	2.	Line	14.	*read*	after bonnet, trews, coarse, &c.
——	—	——	21.	——	—— itself: as I, &c.
——	—	——	26.	——	—— to The, &c.
——	6.	——	24.	——	—— good; though, &c.
——	—	——	26.	——	—— stand. *(Exit Attendant.*
——	14.	——	2.	——	—— begun; in, &c.
——	24.	——	15.	——	—— proposed.—
——	29.	——	13.	——	—— yourself."—
——	32.	——	37.	——	—— plot,
——	40.	——	9.	——	—— I, too, have had, &c, and "fornicating freers," And "images," the, &c.
——	—	——	32.	——	—— *Earl* Might be strengthened, as to, &c.
——	40.	——	22.	——	—— Our St Giles'.[41]
——	45.	——	13.	——	—— young idolater, &c.
——	—	Note	52.	——	—— see Dr Pennecuik's, &c.
——	51.	——	17.	——	—— Sir Kenelm, &c.
——	61.	line.	26.	——	—— *C. of Ath.* that ?—
——	63.	——	21.	——	—— EARLS *of*, &c.
——	—	——	25.	——	—— *philabeg.*
——	66.	——	8.	——	—— I 'd life lay down, to, &c.
——	—	——	34.	——	—— appear.
——	72.	——	2.	——	—— It was.—
——	73.	——	20.	——	—— forth.— The hay was mown, and made; removed, and stacked. The meadows cleared, were left, again to graze. When I had passed, I thought, the busy bands Of jocund reapers, midst their fruitful fields, With cordial chorus, cheering, as they strove, And singing, to the bounteous promises; Along, &c.
——	82.	——	15.	——	—— his horse,[86] it, &c.
——	90.	——	37.	——	—— Secure your, &c.
——	93.	——	23.	——	—— and leave 't Infixed, for, &c.
——	—	——	—	——	—— be left
——	118.	——	17.	——	—— Of minsteral majesty to, &c.
——	129.	——	33.	——	—— shall hear What our, &c.

John,

EARL OF GOWRIE.

A TRAGEDY.

Nec lex est justior ulla,
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR JOHN ANDERSON & COMPANY;
AND LONGMAN & CO. LONDON.
1825.

Alex. Smellie, Printer to the University.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

JAMES THE SIXTH, KING OF SCOTS

LODOWICK, DUKE OF LENNOX.

JOHN, EARL OF GOWRIE.

EARL OF MAR.

SIR THOMAS ERSKINE.

SIR JOHN RAMSAY.

SIR HUGH HERRIES.

ALEXANDER, MASTER OF RUTHVEN; *Brother to the Earl of Gowrie.*

ABBOT OF INCHECHAFFREY.

ABBOT OF LINDORES.

ANDREW HENDERSON, *Chamberlain to the Earl of Gowrie.*

ANDREW RUTHVEN,
THOMAS CRANSTOUNE, } *Servants to the Earl of Gowrie.*

JAMES BOUR, *commonly called* LAIRD BOUR, *Servant to Logan of Restalrig.*

ATTENDANTS.

A SERVANT.

A PAGE.

WOMEN.

ANNE OF DENMARK, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

SOPHIA, DUCHESS OF LENNOX, *Sister to the Earl of Gowrie.*

LADY BEATRIX RUTHVEN, *Sister to the Earl of Gowrie.*

SCENE,—*St Johnstoune, Perth; and Falkland.*

TIME,—*Twenty-four hours.*

ERRATA.

Page	7.	line	1.	*read*	instructions.
——	20.	——	18.	——	England's ship.
——	29.	——	40.	——	It's station in.
——	30.	——	14.	——	forget. It is.
——	34.	——	10.	——	Oh !—Ha !
——	40.	——	7.	——	So, here, the.
——	44.	——	6.	——	Your royal.
——	45.	——	34.	——	Within ; with.
——	48.	——	12.	——	Or to the credit of his lordship's rank.
——	50.	——	15.	——	*pose.* His.
——	56.	——	22.	——	E'er since.
——	57.	——	6.	——	it : the.
——	59.	——	1.	——	bolder, now, I.
——	61.	——	14.	——	leash.—

John,

EARL OF GOWRIE,

A TRAGEDY.[1]

ACT I.

SCENE,—*The Library in St Johnstoune, Perth.*

EARL OF GOWRIE; *seated, with a book in his hand.*

FROM this collection of conspiracies
"*Adversus principes*," so carefully
Perused, so studied deep, so mused upon,
What have I learned, but that the most of them
Were faulty, foolishly contrived, or failed
From want of secresy, from diffidence
In self, and trusting to confederates.
On such a business, were it possible,
The wise would act alone; not any man

---

[1] To increase its value and interest, in the following drama, it will be found proved, by the *references*, that more attention has been paid to the varied, unexaggerated, course of nature, as exhibited by experience and facts, than to the uniform, melancholy, inflated flow of verse, and studied incident, the intricate fabulous plots, fabricated events, and artificial dialogues, to raise wonder and surprise, so prevalent in what may be called the poetical tragedies, even of the highest celebrity. As far as possible, it is here intended to give a faithful, *authorised*, and consistent representation of this most singular and mysterious conspiracy, as it really and truly happened.

Would on his counsel put.[2] This easier said,
However, is than done. What head, what hand,
Can, singly, or devise, or execute,
Or guard against the consequences sure,
Without advice, support, and after aid,
Where numbers are concerned, where power presides?
Although his father had the Reformation joined,[3]
Lord Ruthven[4] 'twas, the father of my sire,
First showed our disregard to royalty,
To favourites, and the Pope's anathemas,
By Rizew's death, the harbinger of all
The sad disasters that have since ensued.[5]
Abandoned basely by Lord Darnly's self,
The father of his present Majesty,
For this exiled, with Mortoune and his friends,
To England, there in banishment he died,
At Alnwick, in Northumberland.[6] The son
Of Patrick, Rizew's Ruthven, my own sire
Himself, first Earl of Gowrie, William, known,
Though holding the High Treasurer's command,[7]
By the familiar name of *Greysteil*, staunch,
As his forbeirs, to Scotland's kirk and Queen
Elizabeth, with those that tempted him
By false reports, this king, when but a youth,
Next seized at Ruthven Castle, for the good
Of the realm; his favourites, the Duke
Of Lennox and the Earl of Arran, crushed,
And kept him in captivity almost
A year; thus, under his controul, the state

---

[2] King James's Discourse of the Earl of Gowrie's Conspiracie, &c. London, 1600. Deposition, before the Privy Council, of Master William Rynd, 22. Aug. 1600.—Spotswood's Church History, Lib. 6, An. 1600, p. 460.

[3] William, the second Lord Ruthven, and Lord Privy Seal, was among the earliest of those who appeared for the Reformation in Scotland. Account of the Conspiracies of the Earls of Gowrie, by George, Earl of Cromerty, p. 5.

[4] Patrick, third Lord Ruthven, and son to William. E. of Cromerty's Acc. p. 5.

[5] Spotsw. L. 6. Ann. 1586, p. 357.—Arnot's Criminal Trials, An. 1600, p. 38.

[6] Spotsw. L. 4. Ann. 1565, p. 195.—E. of Cromerty's Acc. p. 6.

[7] Sir James Melvil's Memoires, p. 129.

Directing, in the while its sovereign
They held their prisoner, till he escaped.
For this, the *Raid of Ruthven*, as 'tis called,
His pardon he obtained; and, had he not,
To humble Stuart, Earl of Arran's power,[8]
With his confederates in banishment,
In fact, the principals who drew him in,[9]
The discontented nobles, then renewed
His secret correspondence, nor his head,
Nor honours high, at Stirling, had he lost.[10]
'Tis true the king was minor then; 'twas done
Against his inclination, it is said,
To get his lands, with Arran to divide,[11]
By the opposing faction; and have since
Been full restored, both honours and estates:
My brother and my sister, offices
About the persons of their Majesties
Are favoured with;[12] and, as to me, nought seems,
More than of the affront at Rizio's death,
Remembered of my father's destinies,[13]
But by myself. The foul disgrace, howe'er,
Without a trial fair, and sentence just,[14]
That followed him, his ignominious end,
With pardon to the rest, the ring-leaders,
The chief conspirators, and mercy shewn
So oft and undeservedly to all
The popish lords, to Huntly at their head,
Their northern chief, as if to instigate
To rise, and rise again,[15] can I forget,
Let pass unseen, unfelt? Revenge is dear,

---

[8] Sir J. Melvil's Mem. pp, 142, 155.

[9] Sir J. Melvil's Mem. pp. 128, 129, *et sequ.*

[10] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1584.—E. of Cromerty, p. 7.—Robertson's History of Scotland, B. 6, A. D. 1582, 1583, 1584.

[11] Sir J. Melvil's Mem. pp. 155, 156.

[12] King James's Discourse of Gowrie's Conspiracie, pp. 7, 12.

[13] Spotsw. L. 6. Ann. 1600.—E. of Cromert. p. 24.—Roberts. Hist. of Scot. B. 8. A. D. 1600.

[14] Spotsw. L. 6. Ann. 1584.—Roberts. Hist. of Scot. B. 6. A. D. 1584.

[15] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1596.—E. of Cromert. p. 7.—Roberts. B. 8. A. D. 1596.

When sanctioned by a father's wrongful death.
The honour of our family; regard,
As leaders of the Reformation long,[16]
For the religion of the kirk, maintained by it
So stedfastly, and for its English friends;
The favour of Elizabeth, conveyed
By her remarked attentions, when at court;
And by Sir Henry Nevill more explicitly,
My intimate, her French ambassador:[17]
All these inducements, singly, and combined,
Concur, called home my brother and myself;[18]
And here invite, ambition and revenge
To gratify. It is believed we're sprung,
By Margaret, of the royal line; that I've
A claim to wear the English crown, should aught
Befall King James, and tender progeny.[19]
Elizabeth is illegitimate.
However, she's a Protestant, and friend
To our reform; but he's its enemy,
And to its ministers, because they speak
The truth undauntedly, as they to him;
For his despotic principles.[20] A dupe,
A favourer of favourites, and the Pope,
Propelled, propended by the biases
He, with his mother's milk, imbibed;
'Tis fear that makes him stop at Prelacy.
A base born offspring from forbid degrees;
If not the son of David, Solomon
Again: 'Tis known he's illegitimate.
A fortune more unlikely has occurred.[21]
I, through the English crown, may get at his.

---

[16] E. of Crom. p. 5.
[17] Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600.
[18] Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600. Note.
[19] William, first Earl of Gowrie, was married to Dorothy Stewart, daughter to Henry Lord Methven, who was first married to Queen Margaret, and afterwards to Janet, daughter to the Earl of Athole, by whom he had this Dorothy, and not by Queen Margaret as was reported and believed by many.—Burnet's Hist. of his Own Times.—E. of Crom. pp. 8. 11.—Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600. Note.
[20] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1596.—Rob. B. 8. 1596.
[21] Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, pp. 41, 42.

Were he removed, 'tis not impossible.
The sceptres I could wield at least as well.
With less; with nothing but abilities,
And popularity to rest upon;
How oft has mere hereditary right
Unchallengeable, indisputable,
Against a nation's voice, absurdly held
Unalienable, indefeasible,
When joined with imbecillity, without
Appealing to compulsive power, without
Tyrannic principles, tyrannic acts,
To plead, as the excuse, been set aside!
I'd rather live abroad, or here in state,
The Highland chieftain of a kilted clan,
With all my loved, and loving vassals round;
Than be a servile sycophant at court,
To wear a heedless head, may be struck off,
By calumny, credulity, caprice;
Or, by a factious, festering grudge, unhealed,
As was my father's, seek, more sure, his fate,
And play his under part. It yet may be—
But some one comes.

LAIRD BOUR.

Although a messenger
His guise bespeaks, he seems no Mercury,
Fresh youth and vigour's opposite; he'll ne'er
Get welcome by his looks.[22] I like them not.
His eyes each other cross, and disagree,
Distract and disconcert their own effects.
They bode no good. They're at cross purposes.
I like not those who look two ways at once.
But 'tis unfair to make our estimate
Of worth, from what appears externally;
To weigh the kernel's value by its husk:—
Whence do you come? What brought you here?
Bour. I am,
With leave, my lord, the humble servitor

[22] E. of Crom. p. 101.

Of one who willingly would serve to death,
Were it required, your lordship faithfully, [he is.—
As this will shew (*presenting a letter*); as well as who
I've orders to deliver also this (*handing another*);—
And to request that both may be returned
To me again; that he who wrote the first
May, thus, consign it to the fire himself, [had
Or see it done, as you may this (*delivering a third*), he
The valued honour to receive from you.—
Albeit his domicile is Restalrig,
A little east from our metropolis,
I from Gunn's Green[23] have come, across the Frith;
And, though a gleed auld carlie, as you see,
Unable aught to read;[24] yet, God forbid!
I had been so inclined, and they in print,
The letters of the alphabet I mean,
To help me fruitlessly to make them out;
Without this my security, I can,
I say, unopened secrets keep, besides
Administering, when needed, good advice,
As well as Logan's self, whose confidant
I am, James Bour, called by my master, oft,
My lord, and those about our neighbourhood,
Laird Bour, your lordship's friend's, as well as your
Devoted servant, always at command,
As his epistle will declare and prove,
If its contents contain the verity. [good advice,
E. of Gowr. Then, wise Laird Bour, till, for your
And learned counsel, I request your aid,
You may withdraw for a refreshment. Let
My brother know I wish his company,
To see these letters, from his friend and mine,
Before I answer this by Restalrig,
When he has read them both. Meanwhile, I will
Peruse them carefully; consult with him;
Destroy my own; return them, as required;

---

[23] A house of Logan's, a few miles south from Fastcastle.

[24] Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, p. 48.—One of Logan's letters is addressed to Bour; which, on an affair of so much importance and secrecy, is somewhat unaccountable, when he knew this his servant could not read it *himself*.

And write instrustions such, by you, I hope,
To Restalrig, on whom, with you, we trust,
As soon will make him Laird of Dirleton ;[25]
And you, if can be found a substitute
For reading and accounts, his chamberlain.

(Exit Laird Bour.)

(Opens the Letters, and reads.)

" My Lord,

" My most humble duty, with service in most hearty " manner remembered: At the receipt of your Lord- " ship's letter I am so comforted,—especially at your " Lordship's purpose communicated to me therein,—that " I can neither utter my joy, nor find myself able how " to encounter your Lordship with due thanks. Indeed, " my Lord, at my being last in the town, *Mr Alexander*, " your Lordship's brother, imparted somewhat of your " Lordship's intention, anent that matter, unto me; and " if I had not been busied about some turns of my own, " I thought to have come over to *St Johnston* and spoken " with your Lordship. Yet always, my Lord, I beseech " your Lordship, both for the safety of your honour, " credit, and, more than that, that your life, my life, " and the lives of many others, who may perhaps inno- " cently smart for that turn afterwards, in case it be re- " vealed by any; and likewise the utter wraking of our " lands and houses, and extirpation of our name; look " that we be all as sure as your Lordship, and I myself " shall be, for my own part; and then, I doubt not, but, " with God's grace, we shall bring our matter to an fine, " which shall bring the contentment to us all, that ever " wished for the revenge of *Machivellian* massacring of " our dearest friends. I doubt not, but *Mr Alexander*, " your Lordship's brother, has informed your Lordship

[25] E. of Crom. p. 97. The bribe to Logan seems to have been the lands of Dirleton in East Lothian, perhaps with the title Gowrie held of Lord Dirleton. This, with what the King himself says afterwards to Alexander Ruthven in the study, somewhat favours the supposition of Arnot, that Gowrie aimed at the Crown. The Earl of Gowrie's mother, and younger brothers, were then at Dirleton ; and, on Gowrie's death, fled from it to England.

" what course I laid down to bring all your co-associates
" to my house of *Fastcastle* by sea, where I should have
" all materials in readiness for their safe receiving on
" land and into my house; making, as it were, but a
" manner of passing time in an boat on the sea, in this
" fair summer tide; and no other strangers to haunt my
" house, while we had concluded on laying our plot,
" which is already devised by *Mr Alexander* and me.[26]
" And I would wish that your Lordship would either
" come or send Mr Alexander to me; and thereafter I
" would meet your Lordship in *Leith*, or quietly at
" *Restalrig*, where we should have prepar'd an fine hat-
" ted kit, with sugar, and comfits, and wine, and there-
" after confer on matters; and the sooner we brought our
" purpose to pass, it were the better, before harvest.
" Let not Mr W. R. your old pedagogue, ken of your
" coming.[27] But rather would I, if I durst be so bold,
" to intreat your Lordship once to come and see my own
" house, where I have keeped my Lord Bothwel in his
" greatest extremities, say the King and his Council
" what they would: And in case God grant us happy
" success in this errand, I hope both to have your Lord-
" ship and his Lordship, with many others of your lovers
" and his, at a good dinner before I die.[28] Always I
" hope that the King's buck-hunting at *Falkland* this
" year shall prepare some dainty cheer for us, against
" that dinner, the next year, *jocose hoc* to animate your
" Lordship at this time: But afterwards we will have
" better occasion to make merry. I protest, my Lord,

---

[26] From these letters, there were a number of other conspirators, none of whom have been discovered since; the plot was laid at Fastcastle; and the most active planners of it were Mr Alexander Ruthven, and Logan.

[27] The Earl of Gowrie's pedagogue was the celebrated Mr Robert Rollock; Spotsw. L. 6, an. 1597, 1598, 1600, p. 458;—E. of Crom. pp. 24, 27; but Mr Robert Rollock died in 1598. These initials seem to refer to Mr William Rynd, who was his travelling tutor, and examined, under the *boots*, after his death.

[28] The Francis Earl of Bothwell, nephew to Queen Mary's Bothwell, here mentioned as being expected to dine with him as one of their friends, before he died, abandoned by Elizabeth and all his followers, had fled for safety to France, Spain, and Italy, in 1595, five years before the date of this letter; Spotsw. L. 6, an. 1594;—Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1595.

" before God, I wish nothing with a better heart, nor to
" atchieve, to that which your Lordship would fain at-
" tain unto; and my continual prayer shall tend to that
" effect; and with the large spending of my lands, goods,
" yea, the hazarding of my life, shall not afray me from
" that, altho' the scaffold were already set up, before I
" should falsify my promise to your Lordship, and per-
" swade your Lordship thereof: I trow, your Lordship
" has a proof of my constancie already, or now: But, my
" Lord, whereas your Lordship desires, in your letter, that
" I crave my Lord my brother's mind anent this matter,
" I utterly disassent from that, that he ever should be an
" counsellor thereto; for, in good faith, he will never
" help his friend, nor hurt his foe. Your Lordship
" may confide more in this old man, the bearer hereof,
" my man Laird *Bour*, than in my brother; for I lippen
" my life, and all that I have else, in his hands; and I
" trow he would not spare to ride to hell's gate to plea-
" sure me; and he is not beguiled of my part to him.[29]
" Always, my Lord, when your Lordship has read my
" letter, deliver it to the bearer again, that I may see it
" burnt with my own eyes, as I have sent your Lord-
" ship's letter to your Lordship again; for so it is the
" fashion, I grant.[30] And I pray your Lordship to rest
" fully perswaded of me, and all that I have promised;
" for I am resolved, howbeit it were to die the morn. I
" must entreat your Lordship to expede *Bour*, and give
" him strait directions, upon pain of his life, that he take
" never a wink of sleep until he see me again; or else he
" will utterly undo us. I have already sent another let-

---

[29] In another of these letters, dated the last day of July 1600, he says of Bour, to his correspondent whom he calls " Right Honourable," " He " is a silly old glyed carle, but wonder honest; and as he has reported " to me his Lordship's own answer, I think all matters shall be con- " cluded at my house of Fastcastle, &c.; E. of Crom. p. 104.

[30] This, with another passage equally inconclusive, is quoted by Arnot as evidence of the authenticity of these letters; but nothing is more likely to have occurred to a forger than such a request, particularly if it was " the fashion" in similar cases. Spotswood gave no credit to this letter, which is the only one he seems to have known of; but he appears also to have been unacquainted with the depositions in their favour, published by the Earl of Cromerty since.

" ter to the gentleman your Lordship knows, as the bearer
" will show your Lordship, of his answer and forwardness
" with your Lordship; and I shall shew your Lordship
" farther, at meeting, when and where your Lordship
" shall think it meetest. Till which time, and ever, I
" commit your Lordship to the protection of Almighty
" God.

" *From Gunn's Green the 29th day of July* 1600.

Postcript.

" Prays your Lordship hold me excused for my un-
" seemly letter, which is not so well written as mister
" were; for I durst not let any writers ken of it; but
" took two sundry idle days to do it myself. I will never
" forget the good sport that Mr *Alexander*, your Lord-
" ship's brother, told me of a nobleman of *Padua*. It
" comes so often to my memory; and, indeed, it is apar-
" astur to this purpose we have in hand.

" Your Lordship's own sworn and bunden
" man, to obey and serve with effold and
" ever ready service, to his utter power, to
" his life's end.

" *Sic subscribitur*,

" RESTALRIG."*

---

* E. of Crom. pp. 99, 100, 101, 102, 103. These letters, five in number, of Logan's, are almost as important, in explaining this conspiracy, as those of Queen Mary in proving her concern with that of Bothwell against King James's father. The internal evidence, in several passages, is against their authenticity; and Archbishop Spotswood, from what he himself saw and heard, places no reliance on Sprot, by whom they were produced, who, unless they were genuine, must have been mad, as they cost him his life; Spotsw. L. 7, an. 1608. They are, however, supported, in the Earl of Cromerty's Account, by depositions, that they resembled in penmanship and style the writings of Logan, and are considered as genuine. The coincidence of an English ship appearing off the coast at the time, with what had previously happened, is likewise referred to, as making it highly probable that Elizabeth encouraged and assisted the conspirators; although nothing appeared afterwards, even on the examinations of Henderson, or the Earl's domestics, who were executed, or otherwise, Spotsw. L. 6, an. 1600, to show that any person was implicated, as Spotswood believed, but the two brothers, except these letters,—one to Gowrie, discredited by Spotiswood,—one to Bour, who could not read,—and three to a Right Honourable who remains unknown; as Logan himself, as well

ALEXANDER RUTHVEN.

'Tis well, my brother, you are come. You've met
With Logan's servitor and confidant,
I find, who brought these letters from our friend.
There, *(handing the two letters)* Read them o'er, and let me know your mind.
As you have been so active hitherto
With him, of course, you best can teach me how
To answer them, while rest Laird Bour, his man
And messenger, with his refreshment, takes.

Alex. Ruthv. (after having read the letters)
As you may see from Logan's letter here,
Though not his secretary, for a cause,
Laird Bour is his most trusty secretist,
To whom whate'er he writes he knows most sure
He can confide; because he cannot read.
Yet, is he faithful otherwise, though not
Indebted much to nature for his looks
And manner, both repulsive and uncouth.

E. of Gowr. What made him send them by a servant
Would mar a plot not Mar himself could mar. [such?
He brings distraction in his eyes. I wish
Misfortune mayn't proceed from him. No good
Can follow such a physiognomy.
I read confusion in his countenance.
I scarce could bear his courtesies. He'll hence
Commune with you. I've done with him. 'Tis well.
No more into my presence shall he come.
I felt relieved whene'er he turned his back.
Curse on his ill foreboding phyz, I say. [no more.

Alex. Ruth. Then, brother, he shall shock your sight

---

as Bour, did, till after their deaths, and it became impossible to contradict the depositions in favour of their authenticity. Neither did any thing transpire afterward to support the conjecture as to the object of the English man of war. All these difficulties must, therefore, be explained and removed by the depositions in favour of the letters, of which, indeed, Spotswood seems to have been ignorant; and the secret suppression of farther proof, by the industry, influence, and abilities of Elizabeth and her ministers, whose predecessors, with Murray and Morton, were so active, in an opposite direction, as to the letters ascribed to Queen Mary.

Though, when you hear what he's already told,
Perhaps, he may be welcomer to this,
Than, yet, he seems to be. You trust too much
To physiognomy. You're over apt
To judge from first appearances, which oft
Are false, and ne'er to be depended on. [not.
E. of Gowr. True; oft they are, but oftener still are
They're lights and beacons placed by heaven to guide;
Though only those, I own, with certainty,
Whom nature favours, in their faculties,
With powers and energy to penetrate;
Whose feelings are acute, and judgments sound.
'Twould need no travelled skill, no second sight,
No Scotish Merlin, nor Balwearie Scot,
Nor later Cardan famed, of Italy,
Who his diploma got at Padua,
And cured our Primate here of his disease,
Deep learned in the sciences occult,
I think, to see good luck attends him not,
Whatever may his news.—But, let us hear.
Alex. Ruthv. His master Logan's to Fastcastle gone,
Where, as he writes, he Bothwell kept secure,
From them, "say king and council what they would."
Would that his majesty were there, as safe,
Our prisoner, upon its sea-beat rock,
Connected with the land but by a neck,
A narrow path, no enemy dare pass.—
An English man-of-war is seen, from off
The coast of Berwick, seemingly in wait.[32] [wait!"—
E. of Gowr. An English ship! and "seemingly in
Perhaps she letters has from Neville, our
Companion when abroad, and best good friend
With Cecil[33] and Elizabeth; if write he durst,
And thought her being there was not enough,
A sign, a signal, we would understand.
Did this auld carlie speak with confidence? [boat
Alex. Ruthv. He did; and asked if, yet, a fishing-

---

[32] Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600. Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, p. 38. Note.
[33] Sir Robert Cecil, secretary of state, at the head of the opposite party; and, with Sir Walter Raleigh, enemy to King James's friend, the Earl of Essex. Hume's Hist. Elizabeth, c. 7.

Was hired, to be pushed off from this when called,
Our gardens reaching to the river side,
Provided with a flag-staff, and a flag
To hoist, when to the castle opposite.[34]
These news, he thought, his master fear'd to put
In writing; therefore sent them verbally.

E. of Gowr. If so, we must yet farther question him.
In spite of all I've said, I'll with you go;
I'll bear the blight of his cross eyes again. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE,—*The Library in St Johnstoune.*

ALEXANDER *and* LADY BEATRIX RUTHVEN.

L. Beatr. I, brother, wish to know, what strange, uncouth,
And frightful wizard wight this is, arrived,
As from a distance, at St Johnstoune, some
Few hours ago. A silly gleed auld gowl,
Though pawky, sure; he, almost ever since,
Has been, or with the Earl, our brother, close
Shut up, or holding private conference
With you, or both, as if engaged about
Some great design, requiring secresy.
When asked from whence he came, he answers "*home*;"
When, whither he is bound, for "*home*," he says;
Or, where his home is when interrogate,
Replies, "'tis whence I *came*," and "where I *go*."
A padlock seems upon his mouth; to which,
Perhaps, the Earl and you have each a key.

---

34 "I think all matters shall be concluded at my house of *Fastcastle*; "for I, and Mr *Alexander Ruthven*, concluded, that ye should come with "him and his Lordship, and only another man with you, being but only "four in company, intil one of the great fishing-boats be sea to my house, "where ye shall land as safely as on *Leith* shore; and the house against "your Lordship's coming to be quiet; and when you are about half a "mile from shoar, as it were passing by the house, to gar set forth a "waff. E. of Crom. Logan's Let. to a Right Honourable, p. 104.

Alex. Ruthv. We have: and you shall get the use of
If you will swear to prove, a woman can [them,
A secret keep, you're of our confidence
Deserving, worthy of our trust in this.
L. Beatr. I do. I'm not afraid of perjury. [have seen,
Alex. Ruthv. Then know. The ghied auld carlie you
When on his way along a bye-path, near
The suburbs of the town, I think he said,
Upon the south, and covered with a cloak,
Has seized a pedlar loaded, like a mule,
With Spanish gold; a Jesuit, of course,
A merchandizing priest; a spy, sent here,
Thus underhand, to travel in disguise,
By bribery, to raise his king recruits,
And converts for the Pope; to raise reform,
And raise disturbances, in passing north,
To Huntly and his friends, with what remains.
Our brother, as you are aware, is here
Hereditary provost.[1] He applied,
Through me, to him, for our advice to act,
And orders, privately. I go to see
The king to-morrow. He'll decide his fate.
Meanwhile the carle departs, to watch his prey. [quires?
L. Beatr. But where is that in this, which secresy re-
Alex. Ruthv. At Falkland, still, the king resides.
Of the year sixteen hundred, is not this
The fourth of August, sister Beatrix?
And, of the week, 'tis Monday, I believe.
L. Beatr. Well?
Alex. Ruthv. List! By four, on horseback, I expect
To be to-morrow,[2] ere the sun ascends
From out our Frith, and up the Tay, so like
The Tiber, as the Romans thought, shoots forth
His cheering beams, to follow you from this.
As, of the bed-chamber, or likely soon
To be, from what has passed,[3] I'm bound to join

---

[1] Spotsw. Lib. 6. An. 1600.—E. of Crom. p. 29.—Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600.—Campbell's Tour in Scotland.
[2] King James's Discourse of Gowrie's Conspiracie, p. 2.—E. of Crom. p. 45. Henderson's Deposition before the Privy Council.
[3] K. James's Disc. p. 7.—E. of Crom. p. 24.

His train, and, in his park, a buck to hunt
With him. As chief attendant on the queen,
Among the ladies of her chamber, too,[4]
This evening you are called, I understand,
To wait upon your mistress; are you not?

L. Beatr. I am.

Alex. Ruthv. Then, will you offer this from me; *(presenting a little ornamented casket or box.)*
This precious jewel, in my travels got;
With my most humble greetings and respects
Unto her Majesty; with wishes for her sake
It was with twenty brilliants bright adorned,
For one it has. From Venice first it came.[5]
In passing west, I bought it from a Jew,
In jewels skilled, and of experience great,
In Italy; and shall be proud to have
It worn at court, if you can but prevail
Upon your mistress, mistress of my heart,[6]
To condescend so far as to accept
Of it. A diamond star it is, attached
To a resplendent necklace, by its chains
Of burnished gold, embossed; toward the left,
It is, with talismanic, filt'ring glance,
Intended, twinkling from the breast to shine,
Aurora-like, with cheering, charming charms—

L. Beatr. From o'er the seat of love. I'll do my best
To keep it safe, or for the queen, or you;
And gain the honour for it that you wish.
Although your filter's force should fail, I'll try;
But the best filter of a lover 's love.
Is this the secret, now 'tis out, you made
Me swear not to divulge? That you've some plot
The queen's support requires?

Alex. Ruthv. Your guess is right.
Save to Sophia, if you see her there.
I know our sister will assist the suit
Most heartily; and, if it is betrayed,

---

[4] K. James's Discourse p. 12.—E. of Crom. p. 24.
[5] K. James's Disc. Dep. of William Rynd.
[6] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600. *Note.*

'Twill not be by her Grace, but some one else,
More giddy, less considerate, and stayed.
You understand me, Lady Beatrix:
Our object is, the interest of the queen,
Through love, and your, and sister's secresy.
As to your own, I'll rest upon your oath,
Transferred from what you knew, to what you know
In part, of what you yet may hear,—if *true*.
Then, do you swear again, accordingly?

L. Beatr. Yes. Still, I'm not afraid of perjury;
For, though unmarried, I have sense enough.[7]
Meantime, for Falkland it is requisite
I should prepare. I'll afterwards enquire,
With more success, I hope, into the tale
I've heard, about your private interviews
With this auld, silly, witch-like goblin glied,
The Spanish gold, and jesuit trafficker,
If not a part of your *majestic* plot,
So suited to the humour of the king;
Who shall, this night, if you permit, be told
The whole. 'Twill shew your zeals for presbyt'ry
And peace; but this I'll leave our liege to find
Himself.—You do allow me, then, to tell
It him?

Alex. Ruthv. I do; and shall confirm its truth
To-morrow; though our zeals for presbyt'ry
It argued, more than prelacy, the court
Religion.

L. Beatr. Then, adieu: And may, ere long,
With clear, unsullied, unreflected light,
Your brilliant guiding star auspicious shine
Upon you, clothed in smiling majesty.

[*Exit Lady Beatrix.*

---

[7] William, first Earl of Gowrie, by Dorothy Stewart, had *James*, who died in minority; *John*, who succeeded him; *Alexander*; *William*, who was cited in the process of treason; *Patrick*, a doctor of physic; *Margaret*, married to John, Earl of Montrose; *Mary*, married to the Earl of Athole; *Sophia*, married to the Duke of Lennox; *Jean*, married to James, Lord Ogilvy; *Beatrix*, married to Sir James Home of Cowdenknows; *Isabel*, first married to Sir Robert Gordon of Lochinvar, then to Hugh Lord Lowdon; and *Barbara*, married to John Weems of Pittencrieff. E. of Crom. p. 8.

Alex. Ruthv. If so, 'twill not be much to the delight,
I fear, of this our Scotish Solomon,
The son of David, though as pure the flame
Within, as shine without. But women may
Be called love's messengers. How readily
They run, on errands such! How cheerfully!
How eager to assist! To gain the queen
May serve us both; and suits our scheme. I think,
That all we want I have obtained,—her *heart:*
It's strings we'll play upon, and lead her by;
No leading-strings like those the heart hold up.

EARL OF GOWRIE.

E. of Gowr. As Logan wished, Laird Bour has made
Is with his letters, and your answer, gone, [despatch;
In haste, Fastcastle to; expecting, there,
To find his master ready to receive
His guests. The fisher's largest boat is hired,
To be, at the appointed time, prepared,
And stationed, where our gardens meet the Tay;
Yet, for what purpose he cannot suspect:
A flag and flag-staff are for it procured,
With proper hands: and, still, the English ship
Is hovering off the coast, and near the mouth
Of Edinburgh's frith, beyond the Isle of May.[8]
The signal is sufficiently distinct;
Without advice, we understand it well.

Alex. Ruthv. And I've secured, I hope, through Bea-
The Queen's neutrality, at least. [trix,[9]
I've sent by her the brilliant star I bought
In Padua, of the rich Jew that Rynd
In Venice saw. 'Twill favour her. Of all
The instruments which Providence provides
To aid, there's none, in politics and love,
So sweet in use, so perfect to perform,
As is a female advocate. It will
The easier be attained, from the affront,
Which leaves her heart, as, after Rizew's death,

[8] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600. [9] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600. Note.

Queen Mary's was, more open to attack,
She's under still, of tearing from her charge
Her son, a child so promising.[10]
E. of Gowr. Most wise!
For, if the King becomes our prisoner,
And, like his mother, we could frighten him
Meanwhile to abdicate, his son, the Prince,
Though of high promise for his early years,
Is but a boy.[11]
Alex. Ruthv. The regency, of course,
Would then devolve on her; with what she holds
So dear, the guardianship of her beloved
And hopeful Henry. These would, certainly,
Secure, at least, the Queen's neutrality.
E. of Gowr. And more. With the address of Beatrix,
And Alexander's influence, she'd soon
Forget the King. When regent she becomes,
We, through the Queen, may then direct the state,
Assisted by Elizabeth, our friend,[12]
When he's to England sent, as Murray, joined
With Mortoune, his own parent did, to pave
The way for his dethroning her himself,
Her power by holding whilst she lived. You know
The banished lords, our father lost his head
For corresponding with, Elizabeth
Received, and gave assistance to; despatched
Even Wotton, to insinuate himself
Into our James's favour, till he found
An opportunity to carry him
By force across the Tweed, but failed.[13]
Alex. Ruthv. To seize
The person of the Prince, is authorised,
As the most speedy and effective mode
Of remedy for the redress and cure
Of grievances, and all mismanagements,
By the direct impulse of nature's laws.[14]
E. of Gowr. As precedents innumerable prove.[15]

---

[10] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1595.
[11] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1595.
[12] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.—Arn. Crim. Tr. An. 1600, p. 38. Note.
[13] Rob. B. 7, A. D. 1585. [14] Rob. B. 9, A. D. 1600.
[15] Arn. Cr. Tr. Ann. 1600, p. 34.

Did not, within these five and thirty years,
With other instances of minor weight;
Did not our grandfather, Lord Ruthven, when
He headed, from his hate to favourites,
To popery, and England's enemies,
The slaughter of her David, not detain
Queen Mary's self a prisoner, within
Her own chief palace Halyrud; then seek
And find protection in the south? Did not
The Earl of Bothwell, after Darnly's death,
Her person snatch into his custody;
By force conduct her to Dunbar himself;
And, though a fortress of her own, confine
Her there until she married him? Did not
Elizabeth, at last, arrest her, shut
Her up, and send her to the block? Did not,
In truth, Elizabeth's vicegerent here,
The Earl of Mortoune, this, her son, whose sire,
Take which you will to be his real one,
As well as Ricci, he had helped to kill,
Seize him and Stirling Castle both at once?
Incited by our English governess,[16]
Did not our father, William, the first Earl,
And the High Treasurer of the realm,
When courted by the chief conspirators,
At Ruthven Castle, find it requisite
To wrest the reins from him; conduct the car
Of state, dismiss his popish favourites,
And hold his person under his command?
And, prompted by the same protectress still,[17]
Should Logan's hold, sea-free Fastcastle, fail,
Did not our Francis Earl of Bothwell, since,
The nephew of his father's murderer,
Attempt to seize him twice at Holyrood,
And then at Falkland, in his palace there?

Alex. Ruthv. It will delight Elizabeth, and serve
Her views.[18] Did she not send, at first, a fleet
To intercept his mother on her way

---

[16] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.
[17] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.
[18] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.

From France, from Paris, when she, Paris-like,
Was sheltered by an interposing cloud
Of mist, that rendered her invisible?[19]
Did not our Cunninghame, the cunning-man,
The conjuror, about ten years ago,
Who helped to send a storm against her son
The king, in going out, on his return
From Denmark, toss a foot-ball he had filled,
By his enchantments, full of magic powers,
Toward the rising sun, that lighted near
His ships, and raised a vapour from the sea,
To intercept and throw him on the coast
Of England,[20] that he there might be detained,
As she had been, and Scotland be again
Subjected to the sovereign of the south;
Her witches leaving unmolested, free
From her sagacious demonologist?
A boat from Logan's cage, and english ship,
Will, now, do more than either fleet or fog;
Or her insinuating Wotton could,
To crown the wishes of Elizabeth;
And quash the dangerous intrigues of those
Who join with Essex, to secure King James
In the succession, and get quit of her.
All these hold out authority. Revenge,
Ambition, proffered aid, invite us on.
By such temptations drawn from Italy,
We're now too far advanced to venture back. [send

E. of Gowr. Then, brother, find our chamberlain, and
Him here with speed. What you have done is well.
[*Exit Alexander Ruthven.*

Except, perhaps, some faithful confidant,[21]
None know of this, at least with certainty,
That, when in Padua's university,
I held the rector's chair,[22] astrology,
To cast nativities, with other arts
Of sorcery, I learned, from an adept

---

[19] Hom. Iliad. 3.
[20] Arnot's Crim. Trials, An. 1590, p. 348.
[21] King James's Disc. Dep. of James Weimis; and of William Rynd.
[22] Campb. Tour in Scotland.

Of Cardan's school. They would have burned me else,
Encouraged by the King. No witch himself,
No conjuror, with fire and faggot armed,
He ne'er compassion felt for one; and since
The Danish storm they raised, that drove from him
His consort back,[23] he's been implacable
In persecuting them. They'll catch him now;
And cage him when he's caught. He'll, after this,
No more *good neighbours* torture till they lie;[24]
No more old women to the flames commit.
My father, who, 'tis said, consulted such,[25]
Would not have treated them so cruelly.
While this, my charmed belt, engirdles me,
I hold a charmed life. 'Tis lined with skin
Of adder I arrested in its course
Near Trochrie Castle, on my own domains,
Amidst the birny heaths of wild Strabran,
But by a thought, a breath, a sound, a sign,
One cabalistic word.[26] I'm safe, so long,
While it continues to enclose my waist,
As it contains, incased, within its girth,
As yet secure, a little book, inscribed,
Mysteriously, with magic characters,
To each of which belongs a powerful spell,
Preservative of life. While it surrounds
Me, none can shed my blood: it would not flow.[27]
The hand that durst attempt to give it vent,
Benumbed, would drop the deadly flint or steel.
Th' enchantment undissolved, the charm unloosed,
My life-blood then is safe, while it is here,
My secret, my cuirass, my coat of mail,
Protected in its place, by these my swords,
For either hand or both.[28] With this my belt,
No arm my blood can draw. It would not spill.

---

[23] Hume. Elizabeth, C. 5. 1589.
[24] Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1588, p. 348.
[25] K. James's Disc. p. 18.—Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1584.
[26] K. James's Disc. Dep. of James Weimis.
[27] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1600.—E. of Crom. pp. 13, 30.—Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, p. 32.
[28] K. James's Disc. p. 18. Dep. of William Rynd.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, p. 25.

Spell-bound it is. I am invulnerable,
Achilles-like, though of a mortal born;
And need no shield beside, even for my heel.
Driven by satiety, or by despair,
Unless I drop the points of my rapiers;
To show my lassitude of life, and loose
The spell; I hold a charmed existence, save
Disease, or natural decay from time itself;
Which nothing can deprive me of. I'm safe.
The sly pyne-doublet which my brother wears,[29]
Though wove of wire, both curiously, and close,
To this, is nothing, for security.—
Why do I thus, then, feel unsatisfied;
Perplexed, and agitated, both—He comes.

ANDREW HENDERSON.

My chamberlain of Scoon; I wish to know,
To-morrow, what you have to do?[30]
Henders. My lord,
To-morrow, if your lordship, and my health
Permit, I mean to ride to Ruthven; there, to speak
On business with your tenants, and some rents
To draw, much longer due than, rightfully,
They ought.
E. of Gowr. That journey stay. Instead, by four
To-morrow, in the morning, get yourself
In readiness to ride, equipped as suits
My brother Alexander's company,
To Falkland, to attend the King. Take with
You Andrew Ruthven, and let him remain;
But haste you with such answer back, by word,
Or writ, as by my brother shall be sent.
If in the town of Falkland he should stop,
You'll in Balfour's or Law's be lodged. Observe,
When, from the palace, they proceed to hunt,
Who's there; what passes; how the king receives

---

[29] Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, p. 31.
[30] E. of Crom. p. 35. Dep. of Henderson.—The abbey was held *in commendam*, and, thus, the lands of Scone belonged to the family of Ruthven. Stat. Hist. Perth.

The Master: though at times a little wild[31]
He is, give all his orders due regard;
Obey them with alacrity; return
Forthwith to Perth as soon as possible;
And instantly, ere to St Johnston's here
You pass, lay out your secret, your plate sleeves,
Forgetting not your whinger and your sword;
And come to me. I have a Highlandman,
A rugged, rough, robust, red-headed Celt,
Maconilduy called, if right I heard,
In the Shoe-lane to take, of mettle tried,
Will put them to the proof.[32] Be vigilant,
Alert, and faithful to the weighty charge
You've from my brother, and myself received;
And, if you wish to have your memory
Refreshed, before you go with him, you'll find
Me in the garden or the gallery,
At four, though early; now, 'tis almost ten.[33]
Meantime, to your own house you may withdraw;
But let no mortal know, or what has passed,
Or what you hear, or do, or where you go.[34]
[*Exeunt at opposite doors.*

ACT III.

SCENE,—*A Drawing-Room, in Falkland Palace.*

The QUEEN and the DUCHESS OF LENNOX, *seated.*

The Queen. Unruly, restless Bothwell, turbulent
As was his uncle, who expired in want
And misery, my father's prisoner

[31] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. p. 39.—Campb. Tour in Scotland.
[32] K. James's Disc. p. 26. Dep. of Henderson.
[33] K. James's Disc. Dep. of William Rynd.
[34] E. of Crom. Henders. Dep. p. 54.

In Denmark, too, like him, is fled,
To die an outcast in a foreign land,[1]
And leave us here, in safety, to enjoy
The sweets of quiet, and friendly intercourse.
Even from his favourite hold, Fastcastle, fled,
This palace, now, he can no more disturb.
The clergy, the seditious democrats,
Republican, hot-headed ministers,
Without a noble leader of reform,
Without the Earl of Gowrie's patronage,
At length have yielded to the civil power:
The popish lords, with undeserved grace,
With unexampled lenity, with life,
Have been restored to lands, to honours lost,
To favour forfeited, repeatedly,
By faction, treason, and ingratitude:
The King is trying, to conciliate both,
To get them to adopt a middle course,
By the establishment of prelacy:
Now, every where, with order, peace prevails.[2]
His Grace, your husband, as Lieutenant, kept
In quiet the north, in spite of Huntly's arts.
We're much obliged to him: He merits thanks;
The more that he owes none, from the distress
The *Raid of Ruthven* brought upon his sire,
Now Ludowick succeeds so worthily.

Duch. of Lenn. Yes, after the Glenlivat fight re-
For which he has been well rewarded since, [trieved,[3]
As he acknowledges; and owns, most openly,
The recompence exceeds the services
Your Majesty is pleased to value so.

The Queen. The Duke, my dear Sophia, is too good,
Or you exaggerate, who vie with him,
In, happily, erazing from your thoughts,
Paternal, and religious enmities:
The recollection that your father, Mar,
Now married to the sister of his Grace,
And those produced the *Raid of Ruthven*, drove

---

[1] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1595.
[2] Rob. B. 5, A. D. 1600.
[3] Spotsw. L. 6, an. 1594.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1594.

His gentle father into banishment,
Which caused his death.[4] To be as generous
As he, you nobly strive.—But, to return;
The Earl of Gowrie, brother to your Grace,
Since his arrival there, three months ago;
'Tis not three months, I think, by fifteen days;
Resides, you say, at his St Johnston much,
In studious ease and independency,
Amidst retainers, and away from court,
To which he 's courted as an ornament.

Duch. of Lenn. His love of independence seems to lead
Him thus to act; if not his love of home,
At which he was so welcomely received.

The Queen.—Or to enjoy, perhaps, a varied scene
Of nature, all his own, for polish'd art;
And to recruit himself from his fatigues.
He has been long in France and Italy;
And at Geneva, too, with Beza,[5] once
John Calvin's colleague chose. He various courts
Has visited: Is with Elizabeth's
Ambassador to Paris intimate,
Sir Henry Neville, his accomplished friend:
And when, from Calais, he returned to this,
In passing through the English capital,
Adorned by nature, and improved by art,
By science, learning, and in elegance,
He there received uncommon courtesy
At court, and from the leading courtiers,
Though not from Essex, our King James's friend,
Sir Robert Cecil and Sir Walter Ralegh.[6]

---

[4] Spotsw. L. 6, an. 1582.—Rob. B. 6, A. D. 1582.

[5] Campb. Tour in Scotland.—It is said that Beza, after he heard of it, never mentioned the untimely death of the Earl of Gowrie without shedding tears.

[6] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1603.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600, 1601. Back to this opposition to King James's friend, the Earl of Essex, and the ungenerous exultation he showed at his death, may be traced, in part, the cause of Ralegh's own long imprisonment and execution. He has certainly got more pity himself, than he gave to his proud and noble rival, when, in 1601, he died on the scaffold for a conspiracy, against Elizabeth, as rash, ill concerted, ill conducted, and frantic, in favour of James, as Gowrie's was against him. Hume, Eliz. c. 7, 1600, 1601.—To Sir Thomas

Of Perth he is the provost, which he holds
By ancient and hereditary right.
Though young, already, there, he is no less
A favourite, I hear; is greatly loved;
And has unbounded influence o'er all
The town and neighbourhood, as he deserves,
The virtues and the graces both adopt.[7]

Duch. of Lenn. 'Tis so reported, as your Majesty
Has said; although I fear you flatter him.
My brother Alexander, too, who 's deemed
So handsome by the handsome of our sex,
His equal in accomplishments, who thinks
So highly of your Highness, and whose chief
Delight it is to speak of you, his Queen,
Was his companion in his travels, when
Abroad; in Padua resided with
Him long; and still remains attached to him:
They seem resolved to live and die together.
Our Alexander vows he'll never wed,
Unless to one as like your Majesty
As your resemblance in the looking-glass,
Your envied mirror, serves so faithfully,
That truly shows your beauties to yourself,
Is there to you, whose image never leaves
His mind by night, by day, asleep, awake.[8]

The Queen. Your brothers both have good appearances;
Are gallant, graceful men, of noble mien,
Exciting interest in word and deed.
The Earl of Gowrie 's finished and complete,
As both a scholar and a gentleman,
To raise our hopes, and promises perform;
Though Alexander 's held the handsomer.
He 's well enough; at least, he is more young.
Indeed, fastidiousness itself must own,
The blooming, ruddy, blush of youth he has,

Erskine was given Gowrie's estate of Dirleton, at which his mother and younger brothers resided, with his title of Lord Dirleton; and, on the death of Ralegh, he was appointed to his place, the Captain of the Guard.

[7] Spotsw. L. 6, Ann. 1600.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.

[8] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600. Note.

With all its freshness, health, and sprightliness,
Its eloquence of eye, and voice, so quick,
And air, so airy light, so elegant.
He has, besides his affability,
The gift of skilled magician when abroad,
A spell, enchanting charm, a magic power
Peculiar to himself, with which, bewitched,
Attention he attracts, and captivates,
By fascinations so agreeable,
With some it is a pleasure to be caught.
As by our sex he 's loved, he, by his own,
Is viewed through envy, or through jealousy,
The best acknowledgments of eminence.
The Earl, reputed a magician,
Disclosed to him, perhaps, these winning arts,
Of which he has himself so great a share.
Duch. of Lenn. And so excusable, when so employed,
To charm so charmingly, to banish hate,
And forward love, in compliment to us.
Enchantments such, what woman e'er would blame?
The Queen. By six to-morrow morning, if I'm right,
He is expected in the park. The King
Intends to hunt. As of the bedchamber,
It is his duty to attend the court.
Although he 's pensive seen at times of late,
Observers say, produced, they judge, by love,
His absence, more than you may think, we feel,
From his alluring eccentricities;
As also that of Lady Beatrix,
Your sister, held so dear by all of us.[9]
If she 's attentive to my call, as erst,
She'll soon, I know, if possible, be one
Of our loved company. 'Tis but a step,
St Johnston from, to Falkland—
Duch. of Lenn. It is she—

SERVANT.

Serv. With leave; the Lady Beatrix awaits
Your Majesty's permission—

---

[9] K. James's Disc. p. 12.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600. Note.

The Queen. It is given.
(*Exit Servant.*

LADY BEATRIX RUTHVEN, *in a riding-habit.*

The Queen. You're welcome Lady Beatrix; albeit,
As the first lady of our bed-chamber,
This, your attendance here, be somewhat late.
But you were uninvited; true; and your
St Johnston 's hence far distant; is it not?
Though, holding the same favour of the King,
The Master, Alexander 's waiting too,
Till he 's invited by his Majesty.
I had forgot; as of the bedchamber,
Of course, you 're but in waiting when required;
At other times you 're bound to wait.
L. Beatr. 'Tis so
With both of us; and thus we have fulfilled
Our duties to your Majesties.
The Queen. Then let
Him wait, like you, till sent for by the King.
Let him at your St Johnston stay; wait on
His brother there, who late the rector's chair
In Padua so ably filled, and, since,
Perth's provost's here; read Calvin's folio tomes;
Comment on Beza's tracts polemical;
Upon divinity discourse; sing psalms
His nostrils through, till they are red; apply,
Like his forefathers, if reports are true,[10]
To magic's wizard arts; consult the stars,
What lucky one presided at his birth,
Had the ascendant; from what royal house
Celestial, sprang the house of Ruthven. There;
On Perth's chief magistrate; there, let him wait:
His planet on him shine propitiously.
L. Beatr. For this good wish, I, in my brother's name;

---

[10] K. James's Disc. p. 18.—In his *Discourse*, &c. appended to Keith's History of Scotland, the Earl of Gowrie's grandfather, Patrick Lord Ruthven, himself relates a story of his having given a ring to Queen Mary, which he made her believe "had a virtue to keep her from "poisoning;" a death she dreaded from the protestants. Sir David Dalrymple's Annals of Scotland, *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*

Most humbly thank your Majesty. He means,
By six to-morrow, to be here, to wait
Upon the King. He will attend him thence
To Falkland forest, where he is to hunt,
As he has heard, if health and weather serve.
Meanwhile, as you advise, he has his star
Consulted, and, from diffidence himself,
Lest by your Highness it should not be thought
Of worth sufficient, he most humbly begs,
Through *me*, your will would take it underneath
Your royal care, and, from your gracious breast,
There, let it shine, ascendant, o'er his fate,
He wishes, as he feels, to rest with you.—
This is his star. *(presenting the casket.)* Erratic hither-
He 's for it fixed; its lustre to increase, [to,
And consequence. 'Twill be most fortunate,
If, from his heaven, your breast, it is allowed
To rule his destiny. Or fortunate
Or not, he holds his life as you decide.

The Queen. It, sure, must be a brilliant star on which
So much depends; the value of the place
Be great beyond belief, that so affects
Its influence thus, both over life and fate.
Come, Lennox, let us see this wondrous sight,
Drawn from the firmament by magic spell,
Sent by your brother the astrologer.
If, from the ornamented case enclouds
It, we may judge, it should be rich indeed.
We may be planet-struck; 't may blast our charms.

(Opens the little cabinet, and takes out the star, suspended from a necklace.)

Enchanting spectacle! Delightful sight!
How exquisite the necklace! and the star,
How blazing bright! How sparkling it appears!

Duch. of Lenn. But not, by half, so dazzling, lumin-
Or captivating, as 'twould be, from where [ous,
It ought, the breast of royalty. No site
'Twould suit, but what it was intended for.
If you'll permit, I'll shew your Majesty,
And fix it in its place celestial;
I'll from a wandering planet, changing, fix 't,
To shine, and shed its influence benign,
Where it will shew its powers, its full effect,

Where only justice can be done to it.
From this, its figured necklace studded o'er
Profuse, so tastefully, with precious stones,
This ribbon's place intended to supply,
(Removing a ribbon from the Queen's neck.)
These golden chains should round the neck be thrown;
And thus,—the star from the left breast depend,—
Just loose enough to give it ease and play.—
(Putting the necklace round the Queen's neck, and fixing the lower part of the united chains to her left breast.)
The Queen. In fixing *it*, you seem to wish to fix
And fetter *me* in chains and collars too:
But you forget that 'tis already done.
Duch. of Lenn. We fix the star; but leave your High-
A necklace, for a ribbon, but, exchange. [ness free.
L. Beatr. *(Taking hold of the ribbon.)*
A ribbon, an exchange, will be received
With raptures, if allowed without offence.
The Queen. I got it from the King. What would he
But, since you think he'll value it so much, [say?
This trifle, you're so eager to obtain,
I'm bound, by gratitude, to part with it,
Sweet Beatrix, to be or yours, or his.
L. Beatr. First mine, then his; his, next his neck to
Secure, unseen; there to be prized as life, [wear,
And as the honour you have done his star.—
When so disposed, how much is, now, its force
Increased; its beauties brightened, and improved,
And varied, and enlivened, by each change!
Suspended thus, each twinkling move it makes
O'erpowers the sight, and dims each diamond near.
'T has found a place at last, on which to shew
Itself, and which it seems delighted with.
The Queen. Then let it there remain. I'm fond of
Myself.[11] I feel for it. I'll humour it. [show
If 'twere but for the pleasure it affords
To its admirers, let it there remain;
And to the giver give our thanks. Repeat
Our wish, his star may shine propitiously—

---

[11] Hume, James I. c. 5, 1625.

THE KING.

The King. On whom?—Whose star is it, my Anne,
Should thus exert itself so favourably?— [you wish,
On whom, my love?
Duch. of Lenn. Upon your majesty,
Of course.
L. Beatr. Our Scotish Solomon, our great
Astrologer, diviner, and divine,
Wild beast and wizard hunting sage: on you,
Whose star shines always so propitiously,
Against the witches, and the deer you kill.
"Hear you but reason on divinity,
"And all your bishops, with an inward wish,
"Would straight desire the King were made a prelate.
"Hear you debate of commonwealth affairs,
"You'd say it hath been all your study.
"Turn you to any cause of policy,
"The gordian knot of it you will unloose,
"Familiar as your garter. When you speak,
"The air, a chartered libertine, is still;
"And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,
"And steal your sweet and honied sentences;
"So that the act, and practic part of life,
"Must be the mistress to your theorique."[12]
Who could it be but on your Majesty,
The wonder of the admiring age, of course?
The King. I wish it, lassie, may be so.—But, what
Propitious star is that, gude wife, you've got
There hanging from your breast, that dances light,
From side to side, so splendidly? I saw
It ne'er before. 'Tis, sure, a lucky one;
It pleases so. There is some secret charm

---

[12] Shaksp. K. Hen. V.—Another contemporary author paints King James thus: "His eyes large, and ever roulling after any stranger cam "in his presence; in so much, as many, for shame, have left the roome, "as being out of countenance. His beard was very thin; his toung "too large for his mouthe, vich ever made him drinke very uncomlie, as "if eating his drinke, wich cam out into ye cup in each syde of his "mouthe." Dalzell's Fragments of Scotish History; Appendix, No. 14, p. 84. Some liberties, however, seem to have been used with this fragment.

In it; a witchery; it so attracts:
It seems alive, and happy in its place.
Where got you it, my love; from whom, and how?
'Tis my prerogative to ask; my right
Unalienable, indefeasible;
And non-resistance to require from you,
With your obedience passive, as my spouse,
And theirs, as subjects to their lawful prince,
Hereditary, born, by God's decree;
By right divine, the Lord's anointed King.
How got you it; from whom; and where, I say?

Duch. of Lenn. With leave; 'twas from my maiden sister there.

The King. From Beaty,[13] say you. Then I'll speak to *her*.—
So, lass. *(to Lady Beatrix)* But where, and how, my dear? Come, tell
Us how; from whom you got it, to yourself.

L. Beatr. If 't please your Majesty, 'twas in a gift.

The King. A present; so. And from your lover?

Duch. of Lenn. No;
As I your Majesty's forgiveness beg:
Else she had kept it for his sake; her love's,
If she had any.

The King. Sophy, so it is;
As you did your's, for Ludowick and love.—
Then, from a lover of the Queen's, mayhap;
Who got, for it, my ribbon, from the place
The necklace, that supports it, now supplies.

L. Beatr. My gracious! 'Twill be out in spite of us!
How cunningly he searches round and round![14]
(Aside; and returning the ribbon secretly to the Queen.)

---

[13] Hume, James I. ch. 5, 1623.

[14] "He (King James) was werey crafty and cunning, in petty thinges, "as the circumveninge any grate man, the change of a favourite, &c.; "in so much, as a werey wise man was wount to say, he believed him "ye wisest foole in Christendome; meaning him wise in small things, bot "a foole in weighty affaires. He was infinitely inclined to peace; bot "more out of feare than conscience. In a word, he was, take him al-"together, and not in pieces, suche a king I wishe this kingdome have "never a worsse, one the condition not aney better; for he lived in "peace, dyed in peace, and lefte all his kingdome in a peaceable con-"ditione, with hes awen motto, 'BEATI PACIFICI.'" Dalz. Fragm. of Scot. Hist. Append. No. 14, p. 84.

The Queen. *Admirer* of the Queen's, your Majesty
Would say. As you have robbed me of the Prince,
My son,[15] so would you of my character,
'Twould seem.—And there's the ribbon I received
From *you.* *(shewing the ribbon.)*
The King. Well, then, you got it from—I see
It now—the brother of your ladies there.—
It must—the Master; who *admires* you so.
Admires the more for being cracked
At times; a little heated in the brain.
A young admirer's not the worse for that.
It kindles fire; gives light to see him with;
Attention draws, and heightens interest;
His handsomeness enlivens and improves.
What sort of lover were he, wanted heat?
Admirer, I would say; but I forget.—
Their brother Alexander; yes, I see
It now; and "may it shine propitiously
"On him." I see it now. Forgive me lass.
(To Lady Beatrix.
'Twas not a lover's gift to you. 'Twas from
The Queen's "*admirer.*" 'Twas from him you got
It, to present to her: to shine propitiously
"On *me*, of course." I thank it for its light.
I need no more. I've had enough from it,
To shun its rock. 'Tis fortunate. Go to.
To-morrow I must rise betimes to hunt,
While yet my brows are bare, and I can bear
The branchers of a buck to see, or hear
The windings of a horn; else, Actæon like,
My pack, full cry, may turn upon myself—
L. Beatr. On your Diana, for intruding thus.
The Queen. There; "see it" then. From an admirer.
Admire it too, as much as I myself.— [And
Why not? Then let it here remain, in spite
Of your prerogative: Although, by it,
You've from his mother torn your son, the Prince,
Preferring Mar to her;[16] I, too, have mine,
By God's decree, from birth acquired; and may

---

[15] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1595.
[16] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1595, L. 7, An. 1603.

The giver's star, propitious, shine on him
For it. This still I wish; and tell him so,
My lovely Beatrix, whene'er you will;
With thanks from me—

The King. And *me*, too. Anna, good bye.
(Exit the King.

The Queen. *(handing the ribbon to Lady Beatrix.)*
Calm night; sweet dreams; and may your Majesty
See nothing worse than what you've now beheld.[17]

(Without.) Oh! Oh!—Oh! Ha!

Duch. of Lenn. What voice is that?

The Queen. The King's.
A naked sword he's stumbled on; or witch
Has frightened him with something, in revenge.
His guiding star is by a cloud eclipsed;
'T has hid its face, or turned its back to him,
And disappeared, till he's stoned. The nooks
And crooks are numerous; the lights but few;
The passages are dreary, dark, and long;
Far longer than his fears and fantasies.
He'll find his room at last, and sleep it off.
We'll hear no more of it; but from himself.
His penance will be o'er to-morrow. Night,
With this, will shew its lucky sparkle here,
To fortune leading him, as hitherto.—
Already all is quiet, and he in bed.—
Then Beatrix, my Hebe, health, and thanks,
For this I send. E'er since the bonny Earl
Of Moray Huntly had removed,[18] I thought
His jealousy had ceased. Meanwhile, retire.
When you have been refreshed, you rest require.

L. Beatr. I had a story to communicate,
About a gleid auld fright; a jesuit,

---

[17] A traditional story similar to this is repeated by Panton, in his Dissertation on Gowrie's Conspiracy. According to it, the Queen gave the Master of Ruthven a ribbon she had received from the King. His Majesty observing it, as he thought, about Ruthven's neck, while he was asleep in the garden of Falkland, in order to satisfy himself as to the fact, went to inquire for it; but, before he arrived, one of her maids of honour, who suspected his errand, had conveyed it back to the Queen. Though the same with Ruthven's, on seeing his ribbon was still in her possession, he went away, only muttering to himself, as he withdrew from her room, "*De'il tak me but like's an ill mark.*" Dissert. p. 114.

[18] Panton's Dissert. p. 114.

And pot of Spanish gold; his Majesty
It would have pleased to hear, had not this star
Appeared. But, let my brother, in the Park,
Relate it there himself. It is as well;
For, after all, 'twas but a tale, perhaps,
An undigested, temporary whim,
Thrown out, or to divert, or to amuse.

(Exit Lady Beatrix.

Duch. of Lenn. In birth, in rank, you're equal to the King.
The King of Denmark's daughter's bound to him,
In matters unconnected with the State,
Nor by our laws, nor by our usages,
Unless the marriage contract otherwise
Provides. 'Tis spite and jealousy that works:
The grudge against a Ruthven, first produced
By Ricci's death, his mother's favourite;
Instilled into him with her milk, and still
Continuing its secret influence,
Increased by what was done at Ruthven since,
Though but ensnared into the plot,
Its owner to involve as principal.[19]

The Queen. He, from your brother's courtesies to me,
Each trifle, thus, lays hold of, that can help
To gratify him, in his wish to bring
Disgrace upon your family, so much,
Your father being accessory but,
Already injured for the *Raid of Ruthven.*

Duch of Lenn. The *Raid of Ruthven* provocation gave,
Additional to David's slaughter first;
If dire necessity should give offence,
I say it, though my husband's sire was one,
Their favourites to dismiss, and save the realm.
But injuries received are oft forgot,
Those done are oft, by conscience, kept in mind.

The Queen. Your brothers, too, are zealous calvinists;
By Robert Bruce and Robert Rollock taught,
In Calvin's, Beza's, Knox's principles.[20]

---

[19] Sir J. Melvil's Mem. pp. 128. 129, *et seq.*

[20] R. of Crom. p. 24. Bruce and Rollock were the Earl of Gowrie's preceptors, before he went abroad; and Mr William Rynd, whose deposition was taken after his death, was his travelling tutor, and seems to have been the W. R. referred to in Logan's letter to Gowrie.

Their doctrines they promote, in church and state,
Against prerogative and prelacy.
They 're in the interests of Elizabeth:
And, as his Majesty has heard, lay claim,
Through the Queen Margaret, the Lord Methven's wife,
And her pretended daughter Dorothy,
Since their demise, to England's crown. The King
Himself believes, to Scotland's too.[21] All these,
With the remembrance of your fathers' deeds;
At Rizio's slaughter, and at Ruthven's Raid,
Combine to make him see unfavourably
Whate'er your brothers do, however innocent.
His father's perfidy at David's death;
Your father's fate, may also act on *them*,
Inflamed by Bruce and Rollock's views of both.[22]

Duch. of Lenn. It must be so. These are the genuine springs,
Whence all these secret jealousies proceed.

The Queen. We'll now withdraw. 'Tis late; and may the star,
The heavenly star, the destinies directs
Of Ruthven, shine auspiciously; protect
From jealousies and grudges, can distress
The family; and dissipate the clouds
Of dark distrust, concealed, unfortunate,
Would hide from them the royal countenance.

Duch. of Lenn. In all their names, I humbly thank their Queen;
Who has their lives, and fortunes, at command.

(Exeunt.

---

[21] E. of Crom. Henders. Dep.

[22] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1584.—E. of Crom. pp. 22. 23. 24.—Rob. B. 6, A. D. 1584.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600, pp. 39. 45.

ACT IV.

SCENE,—*The Forest of Falkland.*

THE KING; DUKE OF LENNOX; EARL OF MAR; ABBOTS OF INCHECHAFFREY AND LINDORES; SIR THOMAS ERSKINE; SIR JOHN RAMSAY; SIR HUGH HERRIES; AND OTHERS; WITH ATTENDANTS; *in hunting suits, with their horns.* The King, *in a green coat.*

The King. 'Tis almost seven.[1] The cock's arousing
I heard, two hours ago, and more, proclaim, [crow,
The dawn of day.
D. of Lenn. Yet, still, the lingering clouds
Hang brooding on the hills of Lomond there,
As if unwilling to depart from rest,
Ascending slow, before the wakening sun.
The King. They 're lazy mists, man,[2] rising sulkily.
Like Ossian's gaelic fogs, they 're indolent,
Unweildy, sombre, sullen, and morose;
They float in flakes, the tattered shrouds of night,
The sun has shredded from a witch's wake,
Unwillingly; on some unfinished plot,
By the *good neighbours*, numerous, of Fife,
A hatching met, against myself perhaps.
If so, to fail, I hope, as hitherto,
And leave me to unite the rival crowns,
And get away from Edinburgh's ministers
And mobs, with Satan's world invisible,
Who seem combined to crush and harass me.
I've founded both a college and a school.[3]
What could I more? What would they have?
Their children's children will their lights revere:

---

[1] E. of Crom. pp. 38, 45.
[2] E. of Crom. p. 39.
[3] The University; and High School of Edinburgh, to which Scotland owes the origin of her parish schools.

They 'll thank me for them ages hence.[4] Go to.

D. of Lenn. And so they may, whatever *ours* may do;
For "knowledge puffeth up." Their eyes 'twill ope,
'Twill be the serpent's tree, the tempting fruit
Of their dreamed paradise, by shewing them
How to distinguish their imagined good,
From visionary evil; like the fall
Of our first parents, end in ruin, through
Debasement of our offspring, to themselves.
Of education what 's the consequence?
It renders mind and body both diseased,
Infirm, and sickly, in exchange for health.
It adds to real, fancied grievances.
With envious jealousies, and discontent,
It raises to equality their aim;
And, this advantage gained, to overthrow.
"Knowledge," it has been truly said, "is power."
If they 're pulled up by us, and we 're pulled down
By them, a level to produce, what else
But insubordination, anarchy,
Sedition, insurrection, mutiny,
Confusion, and reverses can arise?

The King. It makes them wiser; makes them better;
And fitter for humane society. [man;
Divinity itself may be abused
By students, clergymen, republicans,
To furnish fuel, kindle and inflame
Disputes, dissensions, and hostilities;
But learning, Lenny, is a blessing; brings
Prosperity and peace. You've still in mind
Your father's wrongs by them, though less than mine;
Though Sophy is your wife; and Mar your friend,
And relative; your sister's husband, man.

D. of Lenn. If government admits equality,
It is, my liege; else, but to levellers.

---

[4] "Cade:—Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the "realm, in erecting a grammar school; and whereas before, our fore-"fathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou hast "caused printing to be used; and, contrary to the King, his crown and "dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill. It will be proved to thy face "that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a *noun* and a *verb*, "and such abominable words, as no Christian ear can endure to hear." &c. Shaksp. K. Hen. VI. part second. Such are Jack Cade's accusations against Lord Say.

Observe that shepherd, driving on his flock,
Toward these hills, directed by his dog,
Well fed, well clad, with bonnet, brogues, and plaid,
So ruddy, hale, blithe, whistling, to himself
And charge, so merrily, without a thought
Of discontent, or wish for change, or strife:
Would education add, or to his health
Or happiness, or king's or country's quiet?

The King. It raises men, from creatures like his flock,
Into a state of higher excellence.
It reason aids their passions to control;
Improves religion and morality;
Exposes vice, and virtue cherishes.
It civilizes, polishes, refines,
Unshells, manures, and stimulates their minds;
Invigorates, by food, their faculties;
Discovers latent properties and powers;
Ennobles and expands their views and aims;
Corrects and regulates the body's self;
Directs its means to greater purposes;
And shews o'er matter mind's supremacy.
It lets them, Lenny, see when they 're deceived.
It gives them eyes, man. Ignorance is blind;
And, like the subjects of your shepherd there,
Leaves every dog to lead it where he lists.
It is well said to be "the curse of God;
"Knowledge, the wing, wherewith we fly to heaven."[5]

D. of Lenn. With all submission to your Majesty,
Though more, I own, than I admit, at most,
Half-way to heaven is meant: for there they 're stopt;
Driven back to earth again, by its effects,
As were the Titans by their mountains piled,
From darkness, to renew their bounded flight,
Amidst their mists and mental miseries,
By witchcraft, and seditious learning raised,
As erst, perplexed, misled, and tantalized;
At variance with each other, and themselves.

The King. Go to. You 're wrong: for knowledge does increase
Our happiness; and is a blessing, man.

---

[5] Shaksp. K. Hen. VI. part second. Such is Lord Say's answer to Jack Cade.

It, like the sun, dispels the cloud of night,
The fogs of ignorance; as time will shew.
It, to the mind, is yonder glorious orb,
Increasing in its powers as it ascends.
What would ensue to us were he extinct?

E. of Mar. As of your college and your school, my liege,
Howe'er, the promise of this day is good.
The late nocturnal mists, which clad those hills,
Bright Phœbus' foes, he conquers by degrees:
He drives them steadily before his beams:
He scatters them; and occupies their place,
Though tardily. They do not sink, but rise,
To yield, to melt, and mingle with his light.
The scene expands. The last nocturnal rags
Atop the heights, like fleecy night-caps gray,
Are almost off.

The King. "The promise," Mar, "is good;"[6]
As at the *Raid of Ruthven*, now a joke;
If no unlucky mar come in the way
To mar the sport. 'Tis my prerogative
To jest.[7] Unless a mar appears to spoil
It. My Lord Abbots, what say you? Lindores?
Inchechaffrey? Tammy? Jocky? Hughy?[8] all?
'Tis my hereditary right, as king,
By God's decree, to joke; 'tis your's to bear,
With non-resistance; and, interrogate',
To be most passively obedient;
As, at the *Raid of Ruthven*, Mar, I was.
Inchechaffrey, man; go to; you know my right,
My right divine, full well; or know it should,
To be hereditary, indefeasible,
To rule the church, as sovereign of the state;
To give grave wit and jesting humours vent,
In spite of all the ministers can preach,
And practice, on their mobs, to hound them on.

Ab. of Inchech. I with your Majesty agree. Although
The General Assembly of their Kirk,

---

[6] King James's Disc. p, 4.

[7] "He (King James) was werey witty, and had als maney reiley "vitty jests as aney man livinge, at vich he vold not smyle himselffe, "bot deliuer them in a grave and serious manner." Dalz. Fragm. of Scot. Hist. Append. No. 14, p. 84.

[8] Hume. James I. ch. 5. 1623.

In our St Giles's church, was met to vote,
Rebelliously, that it was otherwise,
Midst their unkennelled packs, uncoupled, round,
I would your Highness's prerogatives
Maintain; your right to break a joke, as much
As I've to break a fast; and that this joke
Is good; as yet I, from the weather, trust,
Our sport will be.
Ab. of Lind. Oft good from evil springs,
As their subjection, lately, proves.[9] Oft, too,
A mar increases eagerness.
Ab. of Inchech. To mar
Mischief is surely good: To mar a plot;
To mar conspiracies; as did the King
The clergy of reform's, to get above,
And guide, the civil power.
Ab. of Lind. Of which, I hope,
Howe'er, we'll have no need to-day.
Sir T. Ersk. One mar
Cannot impede us much.
Sir H. Herr. If we 're as keen,
As sportsmen ought to be, a-field—
Sir J. Rams. 'Twould add
To our delights to meet with it. No mar,
No meed; no contest; conquest; no renown.
D. of Lenn. 'Tis well remarked.
E. of Mar. Sir John, you have my [thanks,
The King. And mine, man, too; for we have chosen him,
To the exclusion of our Queen, and high
Displeasure have incurred for doing so,
To be the guardian of our son the Prince.[10]
Let females be effeminately taught;
But let not males by mothers be unmanned.
Let Mar his Mentor be, through mars his guide;
A Mar himself, he'll know how mars to shun.
Excuse us, Mar. A good, a fruitful joke
Is oft an excellent text to preach upon.
Lindores, Inchechaffrey, is it not? Go to.

---

[9] Spotsw. L. 6, an. 1597.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1597.
[10] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1595.

'Tis my prerogative to joke. You 're now
Convinced that Mar will do us good; increase
Our sport, and evil mar, for our behoof,
In either way.—We 're mounted well; the hounds
Are staunch, deer plenty, weather promising.
We only wait to hear the call to horse.—
An English ship of war has been observed
To hover off our coast, beyond the frith.
Can she have letters from the Earl of Essex?[11]
" Were now the general of Elizabeth
" (As in good time he may) from *Ireland* coming,
" Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,
" How many would the peaceful city quit,
" To welcome him?"[12] So prematurely sang,
Her medley-gifted bard theatrical,
In compliment to this our noble friend;
Comparing him to his great *Henry Fifth.*
Though unsuccessful in this enterprize;
And somewhat proud, hot-headed, thoughtless, rash,
And inconsiderate; he, like his looks,[13]
I'm told, accomplished, open, generous,
And brave, is, on the whole, a better man,
As well as handsomer, than any foe
Of faction tries to undervalue him.
Her favourites are handsome; so are mine.
Their properties are visible. They suit
The eye, for show, where show is suitable,
As in a suite, to draw respect—
But who are those, I see, who this way speed,
Along the road that leads from Perth, just come
In sight, where it half circles round the hill?

D. of Lenn. Betwixt and the horizon, they appear,
Upon the brow of yonder eminence.

E. of Mar. Exactly three of them; on goodly steeds.
They seem in haste.

Sir T. Ersk. As if to join our sport,
Intent they scour. They for the palace make.

---

[11] Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1601.—Hume, Eliz. c. 7, 1600.

[12] Shaksp. K. Hen. V.

[13] Vertue's Illustrious Heads. *Earl of Essex.*—In this valuable collection of portraits, how different is the expression of *Essex*, from that of *Leicester*, or even of his rival *Raleigh!*

Sir J. Rams. Yes; for the palace.
Sir H. Herr. From St Johnston, straight.
D. of Lenn. And Alexander Ruthven, sure, is he,
Who leads toward the palace.
The King. Thence to "shine
"Propitiously" upon our sport, while I
Am here. *(Aside.)*
E. of Mar. They see us now. They turn this way.
The King. 'Tis well. He cannot both be here, and there.
I'll keep him in my eye. *(Aside.)* They're come in time.
As I invited him to hunt with us,
The Earl of Gowrie's self must be detained. [meant.—[14]
D. of Lenn. Again they wheel, as for the town they
Though by its houses hid, they 'll re-appear.—

ALEXANDER RUTHVEN, *in a hunting dress;* followed by ANDREW RUTHVEN, and HENDERSON.[15]

The King. Where have you, man, been loitering, all this while? *(To Alexander Ruthven.)*
You're one of our bed-chamber? are you not?
Alex. Ruthv. (Bowing very low to the King.)[16] I own I am; and that, with shame, I've been
Most negligent in my attendance due
On my indulgent Sovereign. But, I trust,
My future conduct will obliterate
The past.
The King. Go to. Then, join our company; *(leaning his hand, and clapping him on the shoulder.)*[17]
I'm pleased to see the splendour of my train
Increased, by two such proper looking youths,
As Gowrie, and yourself; had he been here—
Alex. Ruthv. To crown his wish—
The King. Enough. No more. Go to.

---

[14] K. James's Disc. p. 1.
[15] E. of Crom. p. 45.
[16] K. James's Disc. p. 1.
[17] E. of Crom. pp. 46, 47.—"His (King James's) legs were verey "weake, having had (as was thoght) some foul play in his youthe, or "rather before he was borne; yet he was not able to stand at seven "zeires of age: that weakness made him euir leaning one other men's "shoulders." Dalz. Fragm. of Scot. Hist. App. No. 14.

Though he 's away, alone, you 're welcome, man.
Keep close by *me*, until the chase is o'er.

Alex. Ruthv. Ere it begin, with leave, I would request
Your Majesty to step aside a pace.
I would communicate what it may please
You royal ear to listen to; and you
To witness, for security against
Mistake.

The King. Well, this way come, man. *(Clapping him on the shoulder, and going aside.)*[18]
But, look up.
None hear. Why thus dejected?[19] Now, proceed.
Go to. Make haste. We've little leisure, man.

Alex. Ruthv. As yesterday abroad I southward strolled,
Alone, to take the air, among the fields
Without the town, St Johnston near, I met,
Beneath the cover of a cloak cast round his mouth,
As if his face, and something under it,
To hide, a most suspicious looking man.
The place was lonely; and no path led through
Its bounds. I asked his name; what brought him there;
And whence he came; on which he was so much
Amazed and stunned, to satisfy myself,
I threw aside the laps above his arm,
That seemed to bear a bulky load beneath,
And found a vessel there concealed, wide mouthed,
Of large dimensions, full of coined gold,
In pieces broad and thick, thick crowded, crammed.
I seized the fellow; brought him with his pot
Directly to Saint Johnstoun; shut him up;
And, after binding him, I privately,
By four this morning, as by duty called,
Set out forthwith t' acquaint your Majesty.[20]
In our Saint Johnstoun he 's a prisoner,
Till you shall see him, and decide his fate.[21]

The King. 'Tis lawfully, perhaps, the fellow's own.
Hid under ground, 'tis only then the King's.

---

[18] E. of Crom. p. 46.
[19] K. James's Disc. p. 1.
[20] K. James's Disc. p. 2.
[21] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. p. 24.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600.

Alex. Ruthv. I think he was about to bury it,
When stopped.
The King. But to intend, is not to do.
Alex. Ruthv. Your Majesty is over scrupulous,
What suits a King to let a subject seize;
As will be done, if longer you delay.[22]
The King. A pot of coined gold, wide mouthed, and large!
What kind of gold? What is the fellow like?
Alex. Ruthv. The coin seems foreign, and the fellow scots;
But strange, uncouth, and obstinately dumb.
The King. If foreign coin, a scotish priest's disguised
Low spy the fellow is, and hither sent
To practice on the papists, till some new
Sedition 's raised, as heretofore. Perhaps
A jesuit, with Spanish gold to bribe,
Has hired this scotish tool to scatter it.
I wrote a book on Daemonologie.[23]
The devil's marks I know undoubtedly.
If he 's a witch, we'll burn him at your cross.
I'll send a warrant for the purpose, man.[24]
Your brother and his magistrates, let *them*
Examine him, and make report. Go to.
Alex. Ruthv. My "brother and his magistrates" as yet
Know nothing of this prize. 'Tis none of theirs,
To intermeddle with. 'Twas not for them,
But for your Highness solely, it was seized;[25]
Relying on your love, and secrecy.
Grant, then, that, as your gracious Majesty
Is now so nigh, when, with the chase, your sport
Is ended here, you will, without delay,
Go there; lest he escape, confederates
Collect, St Johnstoun fire, when murdered all
Within: With your own eyes, but see this spy;
Be satisfied as to his purposes
And gold, and hear his narrative yourself?
For privacy, as it requires; in case,

---

[22] K. James's Disc. p. 2.
[23] K. James's Works.—Even after the restoration of his grandson Charles the Second, the learned Dr Meric Casaubon, a prebend of Canterbury, did the same, in defence of the existence of witches, &c.
[24] K. James's Disc. p. 3.
[25] K. James's Disc. p. 3.

If recognized, by pressing audiences
From suitors with petitions and complaints,
Your Majesty should be disturbed, and late
Detained, you may dismiss your company,
And send them back to Falkland, ere you go.
The awe of royalty will draw from him,
What, else, unaided, would be tried in vain.
When you have dined, I will myself conduct
Your Highness, through our gallery above,
Into its chamber, with the study off
It, in the round, secured by door on door,
He, with his tempting gold, was carried to.

The King. 'Tis strange. Go to. My curiosity
You've roused. I'll think of it.[26]

(A call blown without.) But, hark? The horn
We must obey. Our huntsman calls to mount;
The hounds to follow, man. To horse. Away!
Go to. I'll think of it. Keep close by *me.*[27]

(Exeunt all but

ANDREW RUTHVEN and HENDERSON.

Andr. Ruthv. Ere to St Johnston we get back, enough
Of riding both of us will have, I judge,
Without this hunt, if we return at half
The rate we came. When pelted in the pool,
As croaked the frog, what may be sport to them,
Is none to *me.*

Henders. Nor *me.* They long, 'twould seem,
For exercise. 'Tis rest, sweet rest, we pant
For, and require, though got at intervals.
'Tis food and rest I want. Here, at Balfour's,
Or Law's, we were to lodge.[28] Upon the road,
We were to bait, our hunger and fatigue
To have abated; but, 'tis yet to do;
As we return, perhaps. I wish I had
Been left to go to Ruthven, where, among
The tenants, I had fared. 'Tis food and rest

---

[26] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. p. 25.—Rob. B. 6, A. D. 1600.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600.

[27] E. of Crom. Abbot of Inchechaffrey's Dep. p. 55.

[28] E. of Crom. Henderson's Deposition, p. 45.

I want; sweet rest, though snatched at intervals.
Andr. Ruthv. Yes, chamberlain, you're wise, at inter-
By starts, to seize it when you can. [vals,
Post-haste, you're ordered to set off to whence
You came, with answers from the Master *here*,
To the impatient Earl, his brother, *there*.[29]
Henders. 'Tis so; I'm resting to be ready: But
What can this late impatience signify;
These mysteries inexplicable, since
The Earl arrived? Within his study, off
The gloomy chamber, which connects it with
The haunted gallery, or histories
Of black conspiracies,[30] or sorcery,
He reads with an unusual interest,
And ponders their contents, when he is done;
Or writes for England, Restalrig, Fastcastle,
And Gunn's Green, always secretly, as 'twere
To some confederate; or closets up
Himself and brother with a frightful gleed
Auld warlock-looking corby, called Laird Bour,
The servant, said to be, of Restalrig,
As Bothwell, restless, factious, profligate;
A master such, such man befits.[31] The Earl,
It is reported, in his travels far,
Attended by his tutor, Maister Rynd,
Who, at St Johnstoune, still remains his guest,
Adviser, and entrusted with a charge,
Has learned the magic art; has always round
His waist a broad enchanted belt, that keeps
Him safe,[32] and which he's ready to defend
With two bright charmed swords, as taught abroad,
He wields, at once, in both his hands, with skill.
As I've already, for security,
Though under clothes concealed, my bulk declares,[33]
His brother, too, has a pyne doublet on;
'Tis constantly his guard, in case of need.
No wonder, through his wizards, if their sire,

---

[29] E. of Crom. Henders. Dep. p. 45.
[30] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1600, p. 460.
[31] Spotsw. L. 7, An. 1608, p. 509.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.
[32] K. James's Disc. pp. 18, 21.
[33] E. of Crom. Moncr. Dep.

Old Greysteil, had his dealings with the devil;
And, by familiar sprites, the future knew.
I'm ordered instantly, on my return,
To get in readiness, with which to shield
Myself, my armour, lest some highlander
He called Maconilduy,[34] whom before
I never heard of, in the Shoe-gait, should
Resist the Earl, and me accoutred thus;
The Provost, and his timid chamberlain,
Without another officer to help!
If he's invited, what, in honour of the King,
And to the credit of his Lordship too,
What have we there to entertain him with?
The Earl, so deep disturbed, as if afraid
Of what himself has raised, though but the ghost
Of what he would create perhaps, is full
Of perturbation and perplexity,
For which no cause appears; to us, at least.[35]
Some fiend or drives him on, or plots him off.
The Master scarce seems master of himself.
Though wild at times, he 's almost frantic now.
If not with some infatuation struck,
They're surely both deranged; else, were they sound,
What means all this distraction. Sometimes sunk,
Dispirited, dejected; sometimes high,
Beyond themselves, they bear it; rise above
The moon; and out of sight, at least of ours,
Among the stars they wander. But, last night,
I thought the study tower had taken fire and blazed,
With the adjoining room it enters off,
Old Greysteil and his phantoms, in its smoke,
Ascending as it burned. The gallery,
Their haunt, it kindled next; and, as they fled,
Its wainscot walls, its cobwebbed carvings round
The faded tapestries, likewise disappeared.
The roof of all St Johnstoun followed soon,
Till, by the flames it fed, itself destroyed,
It suddenly fell in, with dreadful crash,
To rise no more, the mob lamenting it.[36]

---

[34] K. James's Disc. p. 26.
[35] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.
[36] K. James's Disc. p. 18.

Andr. Ruthv. All these mysterious appearances,
To me, are equally inexplicable.
But something, sure, is brooding that will shew
Itself; the whole explain, and speedily.
Things cannot long continue thus concealed;
The smothered fire will burst into a flame,
And verify your dream. From other proofs,
I fear that something is designed, would need
More cool, and cautious artifice, to bring 't
To a successful issue, than belongs
Or to the loved, and the accomplished Earl,
Or to his brother; both too good, to act
With skill in doing injury. They feel
Too sensibly the stings of guilt, without
Dejection and remorse at times, to thrive
By it; to steer deliberately through all
The secret spectred labyrinths to hell,
The dangers of a dark conspiracy.—
Why has the private turnpike stair, that, from
The close, and through the gallery chamber, leads
Up to the study, been so long condemned,
And only cleared, and opened yesterday?[37]
But, listen!—Hush!—
(A mort blown without; followed by whoops, and shouts.)
It is the death.—[38]

Henders. How near![39]

Andr. Ruthv. The buck has ta'en the circuit of the [park,
And back has doubled, on that spot to die,
He liked, in life, to graze upon; for this,
'Tis oft observed, a deer will do. Although
Wise Solomon himself—not our wise witch
And deer-destroying Solomon—has drawn
From them his lessons, brutes have better hearts,
And heads, than we are willing to admit.

THE KING, *with a deer's single*[40] *in his cap;* AND THE DUKE OF LENNOX.

The King. The chase is o'er. A noble run we've had;

---

[37] K. James's Disc. p. 15.
[38] E. of Crom. p. 25.
[39] K. James's Disc. p. 6.
[40] Single; the tail of a deer.

A glorious brush! The buck is killed,[41] at hand;[42]
As you would hear our horns proclaim, and see,
By this the trophy in my cap. (*pointing to the single.*)
'Tis my
Prerogative. Go, tell the Master, lest
He take some other course, I'm here, to give
An answer to his late request. (*To Andrew Ruthven, and Henderson; who withdraw.*) I think
The chase has left us time enough to dine
At Perth, with Gowrie, yet. 'Tis but eleven.[43]
You'll go with us. Your servant here will get
Another horse for you; and bring your sword.[44]

D. of Lenn. As I'm in duty bound, I shall attend.

The King. What errand, think you, am I going on?
I'm there to find a *pose*, his brother says,
He 's seized a fellow, with a pitchard full
Of coined gold, beneath his cloak concealed;
A lawful prize, from Spain and antichrist;
A treasure, man. I think I'll humour him.[45]
Last night, in Falkland Palace; strange to tell!
On my retiring from the drawing-room,
In which I left your sisters with the Queen,
Along the passage leads to where I sleep,
Between its distant lamps and gloomy walls,
I thought two figures stalked before me, slow,
Resembling Alexander, and the Earl.
As they turned round, at times, to look, I saw
The Master's face and neck with blood besmeared;
And on Lord Gowrie's breast a mortal gash.
The phantoms, pale, and pointing to their wounds,
Both disappeared, as I approached a light.

D. of Lenn. It must have been their wraiths.

The King. If not a dream,
By satan conjured up, to frighten me,
With apparitions, clothed in likenesses

---

[41] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600, p. 458.—E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep. p. 38.

[42] K. James's Disc. p. 6.

[43] K. James's Disc. p. 6.

[44] E. of Crom. Duke of Lennox's Dep. p. 38.

[45] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep. p. 39.—"This the King related to "the Duke of Lennox at the Bridge of Erne." Sir D. Dalr. Ann. *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*

Of mortal men, I, then, was thinking of;
Or spectres, by their genius sent, perhaps,
The guardian spirit of their family,
To show their danger from this jesuit,
They 've foiled in his seditious practices,
Assisted by his fellow, they have caught,
And call upon us thus to save their lives.
Let 's humour him; with Alexander go.—
Although I care not if they both were burned,
Before St Johnston's gate, for conjurors;
This kindling spark, to make the faggots blaze;
This fiery fascinator of the fair;
This woman-charmer, Alexander, first;
'Tis better I should pass with him, than he
Return with me: his spanish gold will more
"Propitious shine" at Perth, than he would do
On me at Falkland. *(aside.)*—But, first tell me true?
What sort of youth is this same Alexander,
Hot-headed Macedonian spark of fire;
Your Sophy's brother, man? They say, at times,
He is deranged a little; is it so?
Great Alexander's self was downright mad.
There, something like distraction showed itself.
At first he seemed dejected; then, at once,
He left the field behind him; hounds and all!
'Twas hard to say which was their game, the buck
Or he; so eagerly he strove to end
The chase, betimes, that we might get to Perth.[46]
Go to. There 's surely something in 't. Is 't so?

D. of Lenn. He, Sir, has been defamed. I know
A most discreet and honest gentleman. [him for
Yet, I must say, with deference, my Liege,
The story of the gold is strange; beyond
My depth it is; I cannot fathom it;
It most unlikely seems; I like it not.[47]

The King. He begged of me the strictest secresy;
And was most anxious I should go alone.
As well as yours, these lie beyond my reach.
To my surprize, while we conversed, there crossed

---

[46] K. James's Disc. pp. 6, 7, 8.
[47] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep. p. 39.

Our path a witch-like, hobbling hare, when past,
That stopped, and, rising on her end, with ears
Erect, looked toward us maliciously,
As pleased, at some misfortune she foresaw
Was near, to Alexander or myself.
Then straight into a bush a buzzard flew,
For shelter, by two merlins keen pursued;
Or hawks, or necromancers, which you will.
But, take good taint of where I pass with him;
And follow me, when you have got your sword:[48]
For I will go. They, after Greysteil's fate,
Will not repeat the *Raid of Ruthven*, man;
Or banish you, my second Lenny,[49] spouse
To Sophy, sure. Go to. Let's gain this *pose*,
And baulk mischief. (*sounds his horn.*)

EARL OF MAR; ABBOTS OF INCHECHAFFREY, AND LINDORES; SIR THOMAS ERSKINE; SIR JOHN RAMSAY; SIR HUGH HERRIES; ALEXANDER RUTHVEN; ANDREW RUTHVEN; AND ANDREW HENDERSON.

Let 's *mar* this popish plot.
No mar, no meed; no mar, no merit, man.—
Then, Alexander, we agree, with these our friends,
From whose society we will not part,
With the Lord Gowrie, and yourself, to dine,
At your St Johnston: But; we all, or mess
At Falkland, or at Perth. Not one of them
Shall leave our company.
Alex. Ruth. The honour, Sire,
From him, and from myself, demands unfeigned,
And humble thanks.
The King. Fresh horses for us wait,
Or not, as you're so anxious we should make dispatch,
We'll take the road. Inchechaffrey, and Lindores,
Our abbots leal; Mar, Erskine, Ramsay, Herries;
If you 're still willing to attend me, get

---

[48] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep. p. 39.
[49] Hume, James I. c. 5, 1623.

Your swords, and follow, armed, where'er I pass.
Eye well my motions; and keep close in sight.
Go to. We'll have a cast of hawks with us,[50]
Perhaps, we'll meet a quarry on our way. (*Exeunt all but*

ALEXANDER RUTHVEN, and HENDERSON.

Alex. Ruthv. Take horse, and wing with swallow speed to Perth.[51]
Acquaint the Earl, his Majesty, with those
You 've seen, not one of whom he'll leave behind,
Is on his way to dine with him. Seek out,
If your pyne doublet 's not already on,
Forthwith, your secret,[52] knapschaw, plate-sleeves steel;
Your gauntlets, sword, and whinger, both of them.
When, served by you, the dinner is removed,
Then, with them armed, observe my brother's call.
Straight follow us up through the gallery,
Into its chamber—Rynd has got the key[53]—
Whence, off it, is the study in the round.
I'll lock you in. For what, will show itself,
Intreat that dinner may be well prepared;[54]
And, lest it should my brother incommode,
Convey to him the crossness of the King,
Or not to go, or with his company.[55]
When we approach, I'll to St Johnston ride
Before, in time, to let him know he 's near.[56]
Now off, to horse, for Perth! Like lightning, fly!
(*Exeunt, at opposite doors.*

---

[50] E. of Crom. Sir John Ramsay's, Dep. p. 60.
[51] E. of Crom. Henders. Dep. p. 46.
[52] E. of Crom. pp. 47, 49, 64. From these depositions, a *secret* appears to have been a coat of defence under the common doublet; the same with the *pyne doublet*.
[53] K. James's Disc.—E. of Crom. Henders Dep.
[54] K. James's Disc. p. 5.
[55] K. James's Disc. p. 7.
[56] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep. p. 39.

ACT V.

SCENE,—*The Gallery-chamber, with the Study, in the Round, off it; St Johnston.*

ANDREW HENDERSON, *in a Secret, and Plate sleeves, with a sword and whinger at his side, in the Study.*

Unprompted, uninstructed, ignorant;
Not knowing what to think, or what to do;
Placed here am I, within a study, off
A chamber dreary as itself, fast locked,
Alone, to study undisturbed, as yet,
The past, and present, as the only paths
That lawfully can lead beyond their bounds.[2]
When by the Master, and the Earl, sent
For it, I wish that Rynd had lost the key,
That gave admission, through the gallery,
To this; or come to keep me company.[3]
Is this the Shoe-gait; this the highlander
We were to take; is this his prison locked;
He, in this cage. Left here, to study on
These mysteries inexplicable, still,
I'm in a maze, for what, I have been told
To arm myself; for what, blindfold, been led,
Through gloomy, great, ghost-haunted gallery,
Where Greysteil oft appears, in robes of state,
Into the study of a conjuror;[4]
A turret, like a lanthorn, beetling high;
Into a place fit only for astrology,
And contemplation on the stars at night.

---

[1] K. James's Disc. Dep. of Henderson, at Falkland.—E. of Crom. Dep. of Henderson, and Moncreif, pp. 49, 64.—Henderson seems to have been, as he afterward says himself, "thrust into this room like a "very dog," thus doubly armed, to terrify the King, on his arrival, into submission; and in the, disappointed, expectation of his assistance in binding the victim, after he had frightened him.

[2] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. Henderson's Dep.

[3] K. James's Disc. p. 26.—E. of Crom. Henders. Dep.

[4] William Earl of Gowrie, who suffered decapitation at Stirling in 1584, writes Spotswood, was "a man wise, but said to have been too "curious, and to have consulted wizards, touching the state of things "in future times." Before his death, "he was heard to make that

If to assist in aught that courage needs,
No agent worse than I they could have chose.[5]
On seeing that the Earl was making for
The Inch, to meet the King, and I had been
Deceived, I from me threw, and left behind,
My steel-bonnet, and gauntlets, luckily;
For of what use can they, to me, be here?[6]
More suitable, a night-cap, gown, and gloves,
For study, than a knapschaw made of steel,
And iron gauntlets, with a coat of mail,
Plate sleeves, and sword, and whinger, for defence
A-field, and action corporal. The Earl
I found disturbed, on my return; the house
Confused; no preparation made, even had
He been alone, the King to entertain,
With honour to his host; nay, serving up
The dinner for himself:[7] and when he went
To meet him at the Inch, 'twas hard to say
Which of the brothers most embarrassment
Betrayed.[8] The Earl, the King and train received
Unwelcomed; at the royal table stood,
Regardless how his guests were entertained,
Or served.[9] If not infatuated, both;
Bewitched; possessed; by demons headlong driven
To their destructions irresistible,
From spite; sure, something is contemplated
To be transacted secretly, in site
Remote, against the will of heaven, to thwart
It, thus decreed to be its instruments,
At which their tender consciences revolt,
Distract their counsels, and their arms benumb.

"common regret, which many great men have done in such misfor-
"tunes; *that, if he had served God as faithfully as he had done the King, he*
"*had not come to that end.*" L. 6. 1584.

"*Wolsey.*—Had I but served my God with half the zeal
"I served my King, he would not in mine age
"Have left me naked to mine enemies." Shaksp. K. Hen. VIII.

Sir James Melvil, in his Memoires, p. 156, mentions a dream of King James's, relating to this William, the Earl of Gowrie's father, when at Dundee, before he was seized, and beheaded.

[5] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.
[6] E. of Crom. Henders. Dep. [7] K. James's Disc. p. 9.
[8] E. of Crom. Hend. and Moner. Dep.
[9] K. James's Disc. p. 10.—E. of Crom. Moner. Dep.

Though, from the love I bear to them, I hope
'Tis otherwise. Here are two doors. The one
Into the gallery; the other heads
Within its tower, that enters from the close,
The turnpike stair, so long condemned, and shut,
Till now.[10] By this I'll watch to make escape,
If not by that. On the authority
Of holy writ, whenever satan finds
An empty house, he garnishes its rooms
With evil sprites. Such garnitures as these
Are not for me. But, come the worst, from guilt
Let me preserve myself. Let conscience warn
Me from it; and, meanwhile, let, hence, my prayers
Be heard, for strength, temptations to resist;
That it may guide me undisturbed, and safe,
Through all the devil's garnishments.

(Falls on his knees, and prays.[11]*)*

Along;
Along, the long deserted gallery,
By apparitions, spectres haunted, but,
These sixteen years, three months, now past and gone,
Ere since old Greysteil on the scaffold bled
At Stirling, and this Earl retired abroad,
Six years ago; if not assumed by some
Mischievous elves, I hear the sound of feet.—
'Tis not Greysteil himself; they 're more than two.—
They seem approaching.—To the door they come.
What can the errand be?—*(The gallery door is unlocked from without, and flies open.)*

ALEXANDER RUTHVEN, *with his sword in its place, and his hat in his hand; having* THE KING, *in his cap, boots, and green jacket,*[12] *by the arm,*[13] *with his hunting-horn at his side.*[14]

His Majesty!!!

(Ruthven locks the door behind them; and puts the key in his pocket.)

The King. A man in armour! coat of mail! a sword,

---

[10] K. James's Disc. p. 15. [11] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep.
[12] Dalrymple's Annals. *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*
[13] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep. [14] K. James's Disc. p. 11.

And whinger, at his side, to slaughter with!
His butcher's knives.—Is this the prisoner,
You said was lying bound, and might get loose?[15]
The jesuit's tool you told me of?—Where 's Mar?
Where 's Lennox? Erskine, whom I sent you for?[16]
'Tis like what has preceded it. The *Raid*
Of Ruthven o'er again; and worse. I am
Betrayed; ensnared. *(Turning toward the gallery door)*
Stand to a side. The key.
Let me return; and leave this haunted house.
'Tis witched. There 's nothing but disorder in 't,
Bare rooms, unfurnished galleries, bad cheer,
Indifference, and disrespect.[17] Go to.
I'll back to Falkland. Man, procure the key.
You'll gain by aiding me. The door unlock.

Alex. Ruthv. (putting on his hat; and drawing the whinger from the side of Henderson.[18])

No. You 're my prisoner!—Have you forgot
The stain upon our house; my father's death?

(holding the drawn whinger to the King's breast.)

The King. Your father's death!—We've always been good friends,
Man, hitherto. I was a minor then;
A child; as I was called at Ruthven, when
They made me cry. My council brought to pass
Whate'er they pleased. You 're of my bedchamber.
Is n't all restored? You surely, man, do not
Design to murder me? Did Rollock teach
You this? Will God approve? Let me return.
'Twill free your conscience. I'll forgive; forget.[19]
Although you take my life, I have both sons
And daughters to succeed me, and revenge
My death,[20] and keep your brother from the crowns
I'm destined to unite, by God's decree[21]

---

[15] K. James's Disc. pp. 2. 10. [16] K. James's Disc. p. 10.

[17] K. James's Disc. p. 10.—E. of Crom. Moner. Dep.—Dalrymple's Annals, *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*

[18] Although he had his own sword. K. James's Disc. p. 11.—E. of Crom. Moner. Dep.

[19] K. James's Disc. p. 12.

[20] K. James's Disc. p. 12.—E. of Crom. Hend. Dep.—From this, it would appear, the King himself thought Gowrie aimed at the crown.

[21] K. James's Disc. p. 18.—Dalrymple's Annals, *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*

Unalterable, man. Even Bothwell's witch
Could not prevent it;[22] for I'm born to do't.
It is reserved for me. I'm born to do't.—
Get back your sword. I shudder at the sight.—
(Henderson pulls back his whinger from Ruthven.[23]*)*
Your father's father I've to thank for this,
The horror that a naked sword excites.[24]
Alex. Ruthv. Sir, hold your tongue. By Christ, I
Your life nor blood. [neither crave
The King. What then? Sobeit from off
Your head you take your hat. *(Ruthven takes off his hat.)*
If not my life,
What is't you crave man; if 'tis not my life?
Alex. Ruthv. 'Tis but a promise, Sir[25]—to abdicate.
But it would not be kept. *(aside.)*
The King. What promise, man? *(clapping him on the shoulder.)*
Alex. Ruthv. My Lord, my brother, Sir, will tell you what.[26]
I'll this excuse embrace, to gather strength;
Come round again; and let this qualm subside. *(aside.)*
The King. Then hither fetch your brother. Go; go to.
(clapping him on the shoulder.)
Alex. Ruthv. If, in the while, till I return again,
You'll neither cry, Sir, nor the window ope.
The King. The promise you require I give.
Alex. Ruthv. 'Tis well,
Then, at your peril, *(to Henderson)* be his keeper, till
I come again.—Be you content: *(to the King.)*[27]
(Ruthven goes out at the door of the narrow back turnpike stair from the close, and locks it behind him.)[28]
The King. What brought
You here, man? Trembling so, and armed. Although
My doublet's quilted, stellet proof,[29] you make

---

[22] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1591. [23] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep.
[24] Sir Kenelm Digby's Essay on Sympathy.
[25] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep.
[26] K. James's Disc. p. 13.—E. of Crom. Abb. of Inchech. Dep. It appears, from this, that Ruthven was altogether directed by his brother, Lord Gowrie, in what he did.
[27] K. James's Disc. p. 13.
[28] E. of Crom. Hend. Abb. of Inchech. Deps.
[29] "He (King James) was of a middle stature, more corpulent through "his clothes than in his body, zet fat enouch, his clothes ever being "made large and easie, ye doubletts quilted for stellets proofe, his

Me bolder now; I have not you to fear.
Into this room, accoutred so, how came
You, tell me?

Henders. Sir, as God does live, I'm thrust
Into it, like a very dog. The fit
Of trembling seized me, lest the headless ghost
Of Greysteil, from the gallery, had, through
That door, appeared to me; and has not left
Me yet. I tremble like a frightened cur,
Awaiting here some apprehended ill.

The King. As you had reason; for what cares a ghost
For your plate sleeves, and coat of mail, and swords.
Had I but sooner known the gallery
Was haunted, I would ne'er have entered it.
'Twas Greysteil's death has brought me here.
Howe'er, I nothing but a ladder saw,
Decayed, in it;[30] no, not a stool. Will, man,
Lord Gowrie do me any evil, say?

Henders. I vow to God, he first shall take my life.

The King. The round or turret window open then.
The window to the close. There 's nothing done,
It seems, to hinder it. A promise forced,
You know, is none at all; and you made none:
'Twas only *me* he asked it of. Had it not been
For this, perhaps, I had not thought of it.
It shewed me what I may, and ought to do.
Oft unexpected good from evil springs.

(Henderson opens the window farthest off.)

Henders. I've opened it. To the spy tower it looks.[31]

The King. Fy, man, you're wrong. 'Twas this, this nearest me.
This, this toward the close, the gate, and street.

(As Henderson goes to open the nearest window, the little turnpike door is unlocked from without.)

ALEXANDER RUTHVEN; *who locks the door, and springs upon the King with a garter in his hand.*

"breeches in grate plaits and full stuffed. He was naturalie of a timo-
"rous dispositione, which was ye gratest reasone of his quilted doub-
"letts." Dalz. Fragm. of Scot. Hist. App. No. 14.

[30] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

[31] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep. One of the towers of the town wall. In the Stat. Acc. of Perth, it is called the Spey Tower.

Alex. Ruthv. By God, there is no remedy!
(seizing the King by both hands.)
The King. Let go!
I am a Prince, and free. I'll not be bound.
(While the King is struggling to get loose, Henderson draws away the garter from Ruthven, and, reaching over the King's shoulder, opens the window at his back.)[32]
A cry without, as if from the close below.
To horse! To horse!—By the back gate, the King
Is gone for Falkland.—Haste. Horse! Horse! Away![33]
The King. (continuing to pull Ruthven to the open window.)
'Tis to detach them: Leave me here alone.
(while Ruthven is trying to stop up his mouth with his hand)
Help! Help! Mar! Treason! Help! I am betrayed!
They're murdering me!—'Tis false! I'm here! Help! Help![34]
Alex. Ruthv. (to Henderson) Is there no help with thee? Woe worth thee for't,
Thou villain! We all die.[35]
(grasping the guard of his own sword to draw it, which the King endeavours to prevent. While they are struggling, Henderson, turning the key, unlocks and opens the door to the narrow turnpike stair.[36]

SIR JOHN RAMSAY *rushes in at the turnpike door, with the King's hawk on his hand.*[37]

The King. Brave Ramsay, hail!

---

[32] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep.
[33] K. James's Disc. p. 14.—E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.
[34] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Hend. Abbs. of Inchech. and Lind. and Sir T. Ersk. Deps.
[35] From this exclamation, it is evident the Earl and his brother had relied on the assistance they expected from Henderson, however inconsiderately.
[36] E. of Crom. Hend. Dep. If Henderson's boast to his wife was just, that he had *twice* saved the King from being stabbed, he must both have wrested his own weapon from Ruthven, and here again assisted the King in preventing him from drawing the sword belonging to himself.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1601. *Note.*
[37] E. of Crom. Hend. and Sir J. Rams. Deps.

Where have you been till now? Where Lennox, Mar,
And Erskine? All of you?
Sir J. Rams. He, Ruthven there,
Prevented us. He said you wished us not
To follow you; and turned us back *himself.*[38]
The King. When I had ordered him to call you. Fy!
Sir J. Rams. He Erskine stopped by doing so;[39] but now,
Go, find a perch, *(throwing the hawk off his hand)* I'll be the hawk myself,
And this my quarry.[40] I'll to this bye-check[41]
Betake, and stoop at it, to check its flight.
(Draws his whinger.)
The King. Meanwhile, I'll put my foot upon her leash.
Strike high, for he has a pyne doublet on,
A secret underneath, will save him else.[42]
(Henderson steals from behind the King, and escapes by the turnpike door.)[43]
The man is off. Who can he be?
Sir J. Rams. This one's
Confederate. A hired assassin.
The King. No.
Sir J. Rams. Be what he will, let this, his master, seek
Him out.
(after giving Ruthven some cuts, while the King thrusts him toward the back turnpike door,)[44]
Go, find him, if you *can.*

SIR THOMAS ERSKINE; SIR HUGH HERRIES; AND OTHERS.

Sir T. Ersk. Fy! Strike!
This is the traitor!

---

[38] E. of Crom. Graham of Urquhill's Dep.
[39] K. James's Disc. p. 10.—Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. Sir T. Ersk. Dep.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.
[40] *Quarry*, the fowl a hawk flies at.
[41] *Check*, is when a hawk forsakes her proper game, and flies at crows, pyes, or the like, that cross her.
[42] E. of Crom. Sir J. Rams. Dep. This is somewhat inconsistent with the horror at the sight of a naked sword laid to his Majesty's charge; unless it was here overcome by attention to his personal safety. —Dalrymple's Annals, *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*
[43] E. of Crom. Hend. and Sir J. Rams. Deps.
[44] K. James's Disc. p. 16.—E. of Crom. Sir J. Rams. Dep.

Sir H. Herr. See! The blood besmears
His face and neck.[45]
Sir T. Ersk. (*giving Ruthven a finishing stroke*)
Take, for thy treason, that.[46]
Alex. Ruthv. (*looking up as he falls out at the door*)
Alas! Alas! It was no wyte of mine![47]
The King. Then, let him blame his star for it. The
Which, from his calculations, was to shine [star,
He trusted, so "propitiously." Go to.
His observations, on it, have been wrong.
'Tis now eclipsed, to him; on him, 't will shine
No more.—"Alas!" he cried, "it was no wyte
"Of mine!"
A violent battering on the outside of the gallery door.[48]
Sir J. Rams. Who 's there?
Sir H. Herr. The King is safe.
(*To those without.*

A PAGE *enters at the little turnpike door, and, after whispering to the King, withdraws.*[49]

The King. They 're friends.
Besides the information of the page,
I, from their voices, hear, 'tis Lennox, Mar,
And others of our company, our friends,
Have followed by the way they saw me led,
Attempting, unsuccessfully, to us
To gain an entrance. They've been all deceived.
I marked the ladder, in the gallery,
Myself, they're trying to get access with.[50]

---

[45] In Sir John Ramsay's Deposition, it is printed "strike laigh;" but from Ruthven's coat of defence, as well as from these marks of what he had done, it seems to be an error for 'strike high,' where the pyne doublet gave no security from a death wound.

[46] Sir Thomas Erskine was rewarded with the estate, and, in 1603, the title of Lord Dirleton. On the fall of Sir Walter Ralegh, in England, he got his' place of captain of the Guard, was created Viscount Fenton, Earl of Kelly, and made a Knight of the Garter in 1609.

[47] K. James's Disc. p. 16.—E. of Crom. Sir T. Ersk. Dep.—In Logan's Letters, on the contrary, as well as in his whole behaviour, he appears the most active conspirator, though under his brother the Earl of Gowrie's directions.

[48] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

[49] E. Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

[50] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

Alarms.—The great Bell in Perth rings.[51]

What frightful passing-bell to death is that,
With such funereal tollings deep, that rings,
And fills the air, reverberating round,
A summons to the grave in every sound?—

THOMAS CRANSTOUN, *at the narrow turnpike door, from the turnpike stair, with a drawn sword; followed by the* EARL OF GOWRIE, *with Henderson's steel bonnet on his head, and a drawn sword in each hand, attended by others armed, all with swords. The King, with the hawk, by Ramsay, Erskine, Herries, and other combatants on his side, is thrust into the Study behind them.*[52]

E. of Gowr. I'll have possession of my house; or die.[53]
Sir T. Ersk. To the foul murder of our lord the King,
Do you intend to add the lives of all
Of us?[54] all here; confiding in the laws,

---

[51] E. of Crom. Baillie Andrew Roy and Alex. Peebles's Deps.

[52] K. James's Disc. p. 17.—E. of Crom. Hend. Abb. of Lind. Sir T. Ersk. and Sir J. Rams. Deps. Notwithstanding Henderson's supposition, with Sir David Dalrymple's and Dr Robertson's argument to the contrary, agreeable to the King's own account, in his *Discourse* on the subject, pp. 13, 14, from the reason Ruthven assigned for leaving the King, his return with a garter, his exclamations then, and at his death, with the Abbot of Inchechaffrey's deposition, it would appear he had, when he left the study, actually gone by the door of the back turnpike stair leading to the close, to consult with his brother, and procure a band; had accidentally met with him when he went from the close as if to enquire for the King, and had been encouraged by the Earl to proceed, from its being too late to retract; that it had been concerted Ruthven should return with the garter to bind the King, while the Earl set up the cry of his being gone for Falkland; and, on finding this artifice to draw off the King's company had failed, the Earl had run for his swords; had, as by the deposition of Peebles, made a lacquey bring him the helmet from Henderson's house, at hand; and had flown, in desperation, to his brother's assistance from the close, up the little back turnpike stair, as the depositions prove.—E. of Crom. Blair's Dep.

[53] E. of Crom. Abb. of Lind. Dep.

[54] Spotsw. L. 6. An. 1600.—E. of Crom. p. 29.

The sacred laws, of hospitality,
Which savages themselves disdain to break.
You passed, in coming up, your brother, dead;
In spite of his pyne-doublet, dead; and that
For only aiding you. The warning take:
And let his fate deter you; lest your blood,
For aggravated guilt, should stream like his.

E. of Gowr. 'Tis now too late. Ring on, ye hallowed [peals;
And call to prayers again![55] I must expire
Like him; united die, as we have lived;
Or like my father: which should I prefer?
My brother's blood you've shed repeatedly,
Till arteries and veins have emptied been;
As witnesses each step of the steeped stair,
Conducted me to this, to take revenge:
But, mine you cannot draw; no, not a drop,
Of crimson dye, would deign to own a gash
Into its source, my heart, to give it vent;
To vent your fury thus, and quench your thirst
For blood, were you allowed to flesh so deep.
Albeit these swords should fail, in its defence,
It would not flow for one of you; although
The crimes, you falsely charge my brother with,
Were added to my own; and they as black
As calumny could wish; or as the hearts
Would make us villains.—Let the english ship
Return without her prize. *(aside.)*—Let, happily,
And uncontested; for God's will it seems;
To bless this isle, its kingdoms be conjoined,
As nature dictates. Let his Majesty,
As 'tis decreed, predestined, fore-ordained,
Enjoy his throne; his double throne; in peace:
The Queen, her star. His fears be ever stilled;
His jealousy at rest. My brother 's gone:
He'll, now, disturb no more. 'Tis better die,
Though caught in our own net; the toils we've laid;
In the attempt we've made, and failed in, from
Excess of principle, of tenderness,
And pity; than with ignominy, like

---

55 That day, the whole town had been at sermon, in the church of Perth. K. James's Disc. p. 4.

Our father, by a sentence undeserved.
Come on, my men. Defend yourselves, my foes;
Till some one cheat the headsman of his hire.

They fight. When opposite to Sir John Ramsay, Gowrie drops the points of his swords to the ground, exposing his person, and allows himself to be mortally wounded. After leaning a short time upon his swords, supported by an attendant, he falls, on which his followers fly off, and disappear by the turnpike door.[56]

THE DUKE OF LENNOX; EARL OF MAR; ABBOTS OF INCHECHAFFREY AND LINDORES; AND OTHERS, *from the Gallery, after its door is broken open by those in the Gallery-Chamber.*[57]

The King. (advancing from the Study, with the hawk.)
Here, Ramsay, take the hawk again;[58] she 's staunch;
And well becomes your fist. A busy day
This day has been; but fortunate at last.
You 're now convinced a mar may do us good,
Against mischief; against conspiracies.
Thanks to you all, my faithful followers.
'Twas well that I refused to leave behind
A company so trusty, and so brave.
(Looking sorrowfully at the body of the Earl of Gowrie.)[59]
At least for *us*, this day has ended well.—
'Tis as he said. His blood remains unspilled.
Beduped by Cardan's school in Padua,

---

[56] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—Earl of Crom. Sir T. Ersk. and Sir J. Rams. Deps.

[57] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

[58] E. of Crom. Sir J. Rams. Dep.—Sir John Ramsay, after this, received an annuity of a Thousand Pounds, with a gift of Melrose Abbey and its revenues; was created Viscount Haddington, and then Earl of Holdernesse.

[59] Dalrymple's Annals, *The Gowrie Conspiracy.*

The story of his magic girdle must
Be true ;[60] by some foul wizard wickedly
Misled ; for, though his blood is saved, his life
Is lost.

D. of Lenn. Unfortunate, ill-fated youths ;
Accomplished, noble relatives ; too good ;
Too irritable, sensitive, alive ;
Too mild and merciful ; too much endowed
With all the finest feelings of the heart ;
For the conducting, with success, of plots,
Or dangerous conspiracies ; adieu !

E. of Mar. Lamented intimates,[61] whose father's guilt,
The cause of this deep tragedy, I shared
At *Ruthven's Raid*, though now repented of ;
The hopeful, promising ; the brave, the last
Possessors of the ancient name ; the power,
The honours, and estates of *Ruthven* now
Extinct ;[62] farewell ! How many will your fates
And conducts unaccountable deplore !

The King. Let us withdraw, to muse upon these
Events inexplicable, have, at once, [strange
By their own deeds, the traitors foiled,
And punished ; pour our gratitude to God,
For his protection through this busy day ;
And, while our officers of justice search
For those who have escaped, the bodies leave,
To be attended to by friends around,
The grieving townsmen, and the magistrates
Responsible,[63] in life, who loved them so,
In meditations on their mysteries,
To wonder at their deaths unsuitable.
We 'll back to Falkland Palace ; there to rest,

---

[60] K. James's Disc. p. 18 ; and Maister William Rynd's Dep. at Falkland, appended to it.—Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. pp. XIII, 30.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600. The King writes, in the magical characters and words of enchantment "it seemed that he had put his confidence ; thinking himself never safe without them."—See fully on this Dalrymple's Annals, *The Gowrie Conspiracy*.

[61] Rob. B. 8. A. D. 1600.

[62] Spotsw. L. 6, An. 1600.—E. of Crom. p. 79.—Rob. B. 8, A. D. 1600.—Arn. Cr. Tr. An. 1600.

[63] K. James's Disc. p. 18.

When we have offered up to Heaven our thanks
For interposing thus in our behalf;
For saving all your loyal lives, with mine,
That may be joined, through us, the rival crowns.[64]

(Exeunt.)

---

[64] In the numerous pages of history, it will be difficult to find worse contrived, or worse executed plots, than those of *Bothwell* against Henry Lord Darnly—of *Gowrie* and his brother against his son King James, —and of the King's friend *Essex* against Elizabeth ;—all ending in the inevitable ruin of the infatuated conspirators. In this of Gowrie, there seem to be no good grounds for ascribing it to the King; farther than that his jealousy of Alexander may, perhaps, have influenced his direction to Sir John Ramsay to " strike him high," above the pyne doublet, to insure his death, and get quit of him; which was accordingly done. As here exhibited, the authorized explanations of this intricate, strange, event have been united, and rendered consistent with each other. The depositions referred to were given at the precognition by the Chancellor and others at Falkland, as appended to the King's Discourse; and as published by the Earl of Cromerty, Lord Register, were copied from the public records, as emitted afterwards before Parliament at the trial. These depositions seem not to have been given under any undue influence; for even Henderson's, at the trial on 15th November 1600, was less favourable to the King's own view of the conspiracy, that murder, as Sir David Dalrymple observes, was intended, than it had been at the previous precognition at Falkland, on 20th August 1600, published with the rest, by the King himself, as an appendix to his Discourse.

FINIS.

Edinburgh, 15th January 1825.

M.J.

225 **Historical** Dramas of Henry, Lord Darnley, King of Scots, and John, Earl of Gowrye, by Robert Dunmoor Craufurd, of New Hall, Carlops, in one vol., 8vo, quarter cloth. 3s

23497.37

Harvard College Library

FROM

F. E. Chase

Sir H. Herr. See! The blood besmears
His face and neck.[45]
Sir T. Ersk. (giving Ruthven a finishing stroke)
Take, for thy treason, that.[46]
Alex. Ruthv. (looking up as he falls out at the door)
Alas! Alas! It was no wyte of mine![47]
The King. Then, let him blame his star for it. The
Which, from his calculations, was to shine [star,
He trusted, so "propitiously." Go to.
His observations, on it, have been wrong.
'Tis now eclipsed, to him; on him, 't will shine
No more.—"Alas!" he cried, "it was no wyte
"Of mine!"
A violent battering on the outside of the gallery door.[48]
Sir J. Rams. Who 's there?
Sir H. Herr. The King is safe.
(To those without.

A PAGE *enters at the little turnpike door, and, after whispering to the King, withdraws.*[49]

The King. They 're friends.
Besides the information of the page,
I, from their voices, hear, 'tis Lennox, Mar,
And others of our company, our friends,
Have followed by the way they saw me led,
Attempting, unsuccessfully, to us
To gain an entrance. They've been all deceived.
I marked the ladder, in the gallery,
Myself, they're trying to get access with.[50]

---

[45] In Sir John Ramsay's Deposition, it is printed "strike laigh;" but from Ruthven's coat of defence, as well as from these marks of what he had done, it seems to be an error for 'strike high,' where the pyne doublet gave no security from a death wound.

[46] Sir Thomas Erskine was rewarded with the estate, and, in 1603, the title of Lord Dirleton. On the fall of Sir Walter Ralegh, in England, he got his place of captain of the Guard, was created Viscount Fenton, Earl of Kelly, and made a Knight of the Garter in 1609.

[47] K. James's Disc. p. 16.—E. of Crom. Sir T. Ersk. Dep.—In Logan's Letters, on the contrary, as well as in his whole behaviour, he appears the most active conspirator, though under his brother the Earl of Gowrie's directions.

[48] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

[49] E. Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.

[50] E. of Crom. D. of Lenn. Dep.